

A CONVERGENCE IN A RELIGION COMMODIFICATION AND AN EXPRESSION OF PIETY IN HALAL CERTIFICATION

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Abstract: *The relationship among globalization, modernity, the escalation of religiosity in Southeast Asia, and capitalism cause halal trend consumption raising. The phenomenon of halal certification in Indonesia is interpreted by scholars in myriads of thoughts. Some scholars describe it as a form of religion commodification with more profit oriented, rather than referring to Islamic values or the philosophy of the halal concept. The Islamic symbols are used as trading commodities or marketing goods. The other scholars interpret the issue as an effort to manifest the religious teaching and an expression of piety. Halal certification is a diffusivity phenomenon of sacred (concept of halal, piety) with profane thing (trade and commodification). The existence of halal certification in Indonesia is urgent owing to the inability to control the escalation of products distribution in the domestic market as a result of the food technology, technological engineering, biotechnology and biological chemical processes developments. Moreover, the condition of Muslim in Indonesia and one of the expression of piety is by consuming halal products. Anthropological studies indicate that the character of religious people is always destined to seek and ensure that what is consumed does not hinder their intimacy with God because purity and impurity is important for religious people regarding to the supernatural presence. In fact, there is a contiguity between commodification and an expression of piety in halal certification. It could be interpreted simultaneously to find the convergence. The importance of supervising the halal certification validation agency and the creation of legal verdict must be proceeded.*

Keywords: *Halal Certification, Commodification, Expression of Piety, Convergence.*

Introduction

A globally large-scale Muslim emigration phase to the western countries, resulting in the cultural exchanges expansion between countries, is a determining factor of halal commodities in the world. In France, Muslims order halal meat to the Muslim community that proceed slaughtering halal animals on one of the lands belonging to the community. The slaughtering which took place on the community's land was later forbidden by the France government due to financial reason. The prohibition was based on the law that slaughtering can only be proceeded on the government property. Apart from Muslims' emigration, another determining factor for halal market is the meetings between economic and religious actors, the context of globalization, modernity and religiosity.¹ This phenomenon remained minor until 1980s. In the early of 1990s,

¹Francois Gauthier, "L'extension du Domaine du Halal," *L'Homme: Revue Francaise d'anthropologie*, no. 230 (2019): 153-80.

transnational missionary's movement, which tended to be conservative and even fundamentalist such as Congregation Meeting, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Syria reunified families, where mothers brought customs and traditions, which were passed to the next generation, and understanding that the slaughtered halal meat is brighter in color than non-halal meat. As stated by Mary Douglas, meat assessed based on its freshness and health or its purity not the opposite. Until the 1990s the halal market remained secret and popular around non-Muslim community.²

In Indonesia, there are important cases that mark the trend of halal certification. The first was when Ir. Tri Susanto, a professor from Brawijaya University of Malang indicated that there were proscribed ingredients in some products distributed among the community. His research report was published in *Canopy Bulletin*, on January 1988 edition published by the Student Senate of the Faculty of Animal Husbandry, Brawijaya University Malang. His writing made public, especially among Muslim consumers panic, and disrupted the economy. Numbers of producer experienced a drastic slope of sales volume. PT Sanmaru Food Manufacture, Indomie producer, admitted that its sales decreased by 20-30 percent from 40 million packs per month. Sales of ABC soy sauce decreased up to 20 percent, and the Campina ice cream, that was linked to the study, decreased by 40 percent. PT Tri Fabig, a producer of Siong Hoe Biscuits, was forced to aggressively clarify through advertisements that the product was not *haram*.³ Meanwhile, PT Food Specialties Indonesia (FSI) spent 340 million for advertising funds, a quite large amount at that time.⁴ The decrease in sales show that the information significantly influences the intention of consumers' purchase.⁵

Halal-haram issue that disturbed consumers was not responded well by the government. To counter the issue, Tarmizi Taher, the General Secretary of the Ministry of Religion, took an unreasonable action. To reduce the contradiction, He intentionally drank milk produced in a milk producer factory in Pasuruan and was covered by the media to reduce the contradiction. This forced Indonesian council of Ulama (MUI) as a non-government organization and a deliberation forum for Islamic Scholars to hold meetings in order to solve the problem. The meetings result in establishment of the Assessment Institute for Food, Drugs and Cosmetics (LPPOM- MUI) on January 6, 1989 with MUI Decree No: 18 / MUI / 1989. The responsibility of LPPOM is to provide *Halal* guarantee for Muslims, especially in consuming food, medicine and cosmetics.⁶ This institution has the authority to issue halal certification in Indonesia. After established in 1989, in 1994 the first *halal* product certificate was issued by

²Gauthier. 158-159.

³Suad Fikrawan, "Serifikasi halal di Indonesia, Analisis Kuasa Simbolik dalam Kontestasi Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia," *e-Barka: Journal of Islamic Economics and Business* 1, no. 1 (Juni 2018): 27–82. 29.

⁴Lies Afroniyati, "Analisis ekonomi Politik Sertifikat Halal oleh Majelis Ulama Indonesia," *Jurnal Kebijakan dan Administrasi Publik JKAP* 18, no. 1 (Mei 2014): 37–52. 37.

⁵Aisyah Girindra, *LPPOM MUI Pengukir sejarah Sertifikasi Halal* (Jakarta: LPPOM MUI, 2005). 39-40

⁶Asep Saepuddin Jahar dan Thalhah, "Dinamika Sosial Politik Pembentukan Undang-undang Jaminan Produk Halal," *Al-Ihkam* 12, no. 2 (Desember 2017): 385–403. 389.

LPPOM MUI. LPPOM in collaboration with Food and Medicine Supervisory Board (BPOM), Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Cooperatives and IPB (Institute of Agriculture, Bogor). In 2008, LPPOM-MUI drafted a Halal Assurance System. In 2012, LPPOM MUI drafted CEROL (Online Certification) which was only available at the head quarter office, and can be accessed through www-elppommui.org and there was no online registration for branches outside of the head-quarter office. LPPOM MUI headquarters are in Jakarta and Bogor, and there are 33 branches across Indonesia.

The second case was Ajinomoto. There was a *halal* assurance change, which was originally issued by MUI for Ajinomoto on September 30th, 1998, into *haram* on December 16, 2000. This assurance withdrawal was related to the ingredients alteration made by Ajinomoto's management. Ajinomoto used *monosodium glutamate* (MSG) which in its process, using a catalyst from *bacto soytone*, which contains pork enzymes. Although Pork enzymes are not detected in the final MSG product, there is a utilization of *haram* substances in the process. Therefore, the product was labelled as haram. On February 19, 2001 the *halal* certificate was restored after management replacing the pork *bactoy soytone* with meat.⁷

Another case occurred in 2009 concerned to *halal* assurance of meningitis vaccine which disturbing the pilgrim congregations. In its production process, the vaccine made a contact with pig contaminated materials (*intifa*). This was based on the information from the country that supplied the vaccine, Belgium. However, with the reason of *hajah* (needs), the pilgrim congregations were allowed to use it. Various cases above indicated that the *halal* assurance of a product has attracted the attention of the Indonesian people. Some of those cases are important parts of halal certification trend in Indonesia. The presence of 2014 Law Number 33 about *Halal* product assurance provides legal certainty of a *halal* product status circulating in the customers. It also changes the authority of the previously involved institutions; gives new color and landscape of *halal* issue in Indonesia. The power of LPPOM MUI as the autocracy of giving *halal* certification for 30 years has come to an end. *Halal* certification is in the context of responding to unavoidable encounters between religious followers and capitalism.

Today, there are numerous understandings in interpreting the growth and development of *halal* phenomenon. It appears in contiguity of religion and economy which is described as a commodification religion by some scholars. This commodification is led by greedy capitalist exploiting the piety that turns Muslims into an economic fraud, a position which is defended by Faeghah Shirazi.⁸ Florence Bergeaud-Blacker is also skeptical about *halal* phenomenon as economical device used

⁷Jahar dan Thalhah. 388.

⁸Faeghah Shirazi, *Brand Islam, The Marketing and Commodification of Piety* (Austin: TX University of Texas Press, 2016). 14.

by religious forces, Islamists and fundamentalists in particular.⁹ Meanwhile, the Anglo Saxon writer celebrates and legitimizes the halal phenomenon implicitly and explicitly. There are also those who see this phenomenon as a symptom of radicalism, *hybrid identity*, which Oliver Roy and Asep Bayat called it as a post-Islamism symptom.¹⁰ In addition, other writers mention *halal* issues as the inherit of neo- fundamentalism and neo-capitalism. However, Febe Armanius in *Halal Food a History*, described it as a form of piety and throughout its history, *halal* issues have been driven by piety.¹¹ Furthermore, Saba Mahmoud in *Politics of Piety* also mentioned that speaking in the Egyptian context, the reason Muslims want to live in a *halal* boundary is none other than to define their identity as Muslims, as an expression of piety, faith and a religious mission.¹²

Different views and stand points in looking at *halal* phenomenon in Indonesia and global world encourages the writer to re-determine this position. The writer aims to determine the position whether it is as a religiosity renaissance or as a religion commodification with *profit oriented* by examining the relationship between globalization, piety in Southeast Asia and capitalism. This study sought to explain that the *halal* phenomenon can not only be seen from two perspectives: the religion commodification and expressions of piety or post-Islamism symptom. The expression of piety and commodification can be seen not as binary opposition and paradox; it can be seen simultaneously, negotiate and blend with each other blend and find its convergence. *Halal* certification as a vessel for religion encountering globalization and capitalism could support each other in Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim country. This study adopts religion commodification theory and convergence theory.¹³ Commodification is a process in which religion norms and values have been developed as a commodity which is produced, distributed and consumed through an economy market.¹⁴ Before discussing how commodification encounter the piety behind halal certification, it is necessary to explain these following issues.

Method

The method of data collection in the preparation of this article is a qualitative research method in which the compiler collects information using field research and

⁹Floerence Bergeaud Blacker, Johan Fischer, dan John Lever, "Introduction: Studying the Politics of Global Halal Market" dalam *Halal Matters, Islam, Politics and Market in Global Perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2016). 1-18.

¹⁰Asep Bayat, *Pos Islamisme* (Yogyakarta: LKIS, 2011). 89-126.

¹¹Fabe Armanius dan Bogac Ergence, *Halal Food: A History* (Oxford: University Press, 2018). 327.

¹²Saba Mahmoud, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: University Press, 2005). 40-78.

¹³Baharuddin, *Pendidikan dan Psikologi Perkembangan*, 4 ed. (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2016). 74.

¹⁴Pattana Kitiarsa, "Introduction: Asia's Commodified Sacred Canopies". dalam *Religious Commodification in Asia: Marketing Gods* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

uses secondary data by collecting reference data from books and journals related to the object of discussion to obtain data and theories that are in accordance with the problem under study. The data obtained is processed by means of re-examination so that one data is in harmony with other data, then organizes the data obtained with a predetermined framework so that certain conclusions are obtained which are the result of the answer to the problem formulation. In addition to using this method, this article was compiled using the Internet Searching method in finding the necessary data and theoretical sources that support the completeness of the compiler's references in finding facts or theories related to the problem under study. Then the preparation of this article also uses descriptive analysis to describe the theoretical data obtained.

Result and Discussion

Halal Certification in Indonesia

Halal certification is a written authority validated by MUI to confirm the *halal* assurance of a product based on Islamic law through a deep examination carried out by LPPOM MUI. While *halal* certification is a requirement for obtaining a permit from authorized government agency to include a *halal* label on a product package, *halal* labeling is the permit for placing the word "halal" on the product package of a company by BPOM. The *halal* label inclusion permits on food product packaging issued by BPOM are under a recommendation of MUI in the form of MUI halal certificates. MUI *halal* certification is validated by the results of the LPPOM-MUI audit.¹⁵

Halal certificate and *halal* label are different but related subjects. A company could not place a halal label on its products before being validated through the *halal* certification process and obtain the product *halal* assurance. The procedures for obtaining a *halal* assurance in the form of *halal* certification are: registering the product to MUI, paying the cost of certification, pre-audited by MUI, followed by field audits, post-audit evaluations; the data, then, brought to the authority commission meeting, so that the *halal* certification is validated. Under certain circumstances, LPPOM may carry out spot inspections, and the certification is only valid for two years. The registration procedure for acquiring the *halal* certification regulated by LPPOM is clear. They are affiliated with scientists and mufti as well as equipped with laboratories. Albeit the clarity of registration procedure, this institution is lack of public transparency. Because MUI is *khadim al-ummah* and funded by government, society should be able to keep track of LPPOM and its clients, moreover about the registration fee of *halal* certification. Certification burdens the production budget and it takes 2-3 months to acquire the certificate.¹⁶

¹⁵Panji Adam Agus Putra, "Kedudukan Sertifikasi Halal Dalam Sistem Hukum Nasional Sebagai Upaya Perlindungan Konsumen Dalam Hukum Islam," *Ammaluna, Jurnal ekonomi dan Keuangan Syariah* 1, no. 1 (Januari 2017). 153.

¹⁶Rapihi Hayat, Frank Den Butter, dan Udo Kok, "Halal Certification for Financial Product: A Transaction, Cost Perspective," *Journal of Business Ethics* 117, no. 3 (Oktober 2013): 601–613.

The use of third party services by some companies in processing the certification also becomes a problem. A scandal possibly occurs in audit stage where a deep inspection of the production process is run. Conceptually, *halal*-audit is a professional step. However, this step could be disgraced if it is negotiable. Trade interests and the absence of *internal ethics of conducts* causing religion and economy conspiracy, which is known by the sociologist as the Islamic commodification. Abroad audit-inspection scandal is potentially occurred than a local scandal. In developed countries, such as Germany, Australia and United States, many *halal* certifier agencies require authority from local halal certifier export of destination country. The working system is the foreign halal certifier would call the authoritative local certifier in destination country. For Indonesia, those states should refer to LPPOM MUI. Although it is not an authorized government agency, it is the only agency which issue the certification permit. To grant the foreign *halal* certifier's proposal, LPPOM must carry out verification and field audits at that institution.¹⁷

In Indonesia, after the implementation of Product *Halal* Assurance Law (UUJPH) on October 17th 2019, the *halal* certification process involves many parties. UUJPH mandates the formation of Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. In implementing its duties, BPJPH collaborates with *Halal* Audit Agency (LPH). This institution is in charge of organizing inspection and testing of the product *halal* assurance. MUI collaborates with BPJPH to organize *halal* auditor certification, determination of product *halal* assurance and accreditation of Halal Inspection Agency. MUI validates the *halal* assurance of a product in the form of a decision to determine the halal product.¹⁸

Commodification of Religion

Some scholars argue that *halal* certification process is a part of the religion commodification. Considering the large number of Muslims, which has billions population throughout the world, Islam is certainly a great market symptom and segment of potential market. As a symptom, Islam market could not avoid the rule of supply side and demand side, which has to undergo the inevitable commodification process. Greg Fealy describes commodification as referred to *commodity* (goods for sale): First, Goods demanded by their quality and usefulness and second, Goods for sale or trade objects. Therefore, the commodification of Islam can be interpreted as trading Islam or piety reversal and its symbols could be traded for profit. Although Greg Fealy realize this as a sensitive issue and debatable because it seems that economic motivation involving more than religious motivation, Fealy could not deny the existence of pure religious motivation.¹⁹ Fealy, then, provides an example of the

¹⁷Syafiq Hasyim, "Prahara Setifikasi Halal," *Majalah Tempo*, Prahara Setifikasi Halal, 10 Maret 2014, <https://majalah.tempo.co/read/kolom/144894/prahara-setifikasi-halal>.

¹⁸UUJPH, "Undang-undang Jaminan Produk Halal, Pasal 6, 9, 12 ayat (1) dan (2), pasal 13 ayat (2), pasal 10 (ayat 1 dan 2).," 2014.

¹⁹Abdur Rozaki, "Komodifikasi Islam (Kesalehan dan Pergulatan Identitas di Ruang Publik)," *Jurnal Dakwah* 25, no. 2 (2013). 202-203.

existence of online cyber media industry, from online guidance to missionary business, spiritual industry (lecture market on television), entertainment industry from cinema to literature and Islamic finance industry.²⁰

Greg Fealy conducted a study of religion commodification through understanding the piety aspiration of contemporary Indonesian Muslim society by explaining the strong relationship between the commodification of religious symbol and the difference of religious life exaltation from previous eras in Indonesia. According to Fealy, Islam commodification implies Islamic commercialization, or exploitation of its piety and symbols as a commodity (merchandise) that can be sold or bought for profit. Fealy stated that the relationship between commodity and economy is complex and does not merely happen in Islam. Fealy emphasizes that the meaning of Islam commodification as an aspect of religious economic transactions; how Islamic identity attached to various products including Islamic banks, modern Muslim clothing, books, novels on religious life, and others.²¹ Ronald Lukens-Bull stated that the religion commodification embodies the meaning of religion and penetrate the meaning of religion and ideology into a commodity.²² Pattana Kittiaras describes the commodification of religion as a mutual cooperation between economic and religious masterminds who commercialize teachings, symbols and religious institutions to the market and consumers' habit.²³ Furthermore, the meaning of commodification is a multidimensional and multi-faceted process that turns religious beliefs, religious teachings, religious traditions and religious symbols into a kind of consumables goods with economic value.²⁴ However, Fealy saw commodification as a commercialization.

The role of religion in the modern contemporary world changes rapidly. Advancement of technology and information which raise the prosperous scale creates new patterns of expressed piety. Consumption of Islam as a religious commodity has generated significant economic and cultural developments. The commodification of Islam increases the diversity of society which leads to a growth in consumption of Islamic products which can further encourage Islamization. Consuming Islamic

²⁰Greg Fealy, "Consuming Islam: Commodified Religion and Aspirational Pietism in Contemporary Indonesia", dalam *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia*, reg Fealy and Sally White (Singapore: ISEAS Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008). 15.

²¹Fealy. 16-17.

²²Ronald Lukens-Bull, "Commodification of Religion and the Religiification of Commodities, Youth Culture and and Religion Identity", dalam *Religious Commodification*, Pattana Kitiarsa (London and New York: Routledge, 2008). 233.

²³Pattana Kittiaras, *Toward a Sociology of Religious Commodification*, Bryan. S. Turner, The New Blackwell Companion to The Socology of Religion (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2010). 265.

²⁴Ahmad Muttaqien, *Globalisasi Keberagamaan Hibrida dan Komodifikasi Agama dalam Masyarakat Multikultural. Kata Pengantar buku Abdul Aziz Faiz, Muslim Perkotaan*, 4 ed. (Yogyakarta: SUKA Press, 2018). 21.

products is an expression of faith. The more the company do that, the bigger market for Islamic commodities will be.

Halal Phenomena and An Expression of Piety

The term piety is borrowed from *Piety and Public Opinion: Understanding Islam* written by Pepinsky, Liddle and Mujani; Piety includes three concepts namely ritual, orientation and behavior. Ritual is related to the practice of Islamic pillars; orientation includes the relationship between individual Muslim belief and Islamic faith; and behavior includes practices that reflect religious faith. For example, people who regularly go to the mosque and consider the religion important in life are more pious than people who go to the mosque but consider that religion is less important in life.²⁵ Consuming halal food is very important as an effort to practice teaching, an integral part of fidelity and an expression of piety for all Muslims. *Halal* food is food which is free from prohibited ingredients.

Several studies have been conducted to obtain the data of *halal* products intention. *Halal* consumption determinant in Indonesia are habit, awareness, and religious identity, whereas belief and awareness influence *halal* products purchase intention.²⁶ A study on consumers in Central Java found that there is a relationship between personal religious awareness and product awareness for purchasing *halal* products.²⁷ A study in Pekalongan discovers that *halal* label has a positive influence on product purchase intention.²⁸ In addition, a study with 132 respondents in the Muslim society in Java showed that *halal* certification affects restaurant purchase intention.²⁹

For Muslim society in Johor, Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Sabah, religious attitudes and awareness give a positive influence on *halal* product purchase awareness.³⁰ A positive personal attitude to consume *halal* meat, obedience motivation to the importance of people and institutions' opinion, and *halal* food supervision are the rationale of *halal* products intention for Turkish Muslims in Germany.³¹ The influence

²⁵Thomas B. Wiliam R. Liddle Pepinsky dan Saiful Mujani, *Piety and Public Opinion Understanding Indonesian Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018). 27.

²⁶Iwan Jan Mei Soon Vanany, Anny Maryani, dan Berto Mulia Wibawa, "Determinant of Halal Food Consumption in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 16 Maret 2019, www.emeraldinsight.com.

²⁷Tatiek Nurhayati dan Hendar, "Personal Instrinsic Religiosity and Product Knowledge on Halal Product Purchase Intention," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 16 Maret 2019, www. emeraldinsight.com.

²⁸Dwi Edi Wibowo dan Beny Diah Mandusari, "Pengaruh Labelisasi Halal Terhadap Keputusan Pembelian oleh Konsumen Muslim Terhadap Produk Makanan di Kota Pekalongan," *Indonesian Journal of Halal* 1, no. 1 (2018): 73–80.

²⁹Diah Ayu Legowati dan Farah Nisa Ul Albab, "Pengaruh Attitude, Sertifikasi Halal, Promosi dan Brand Terhadap Purchase Intention di Restoran Bersertifikat Halal," *IHTIFAZ: Journal of Islamic Economic, Finance and Banking* 2, no. 1 (Juni 2019): 39–53.

³⁰Mohammad Iranmanesh, "Muslim's Willingness to Pay for Certified Halal Food: an Extension of the Theory of Planned Behaviour," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 9 Januari 2019, www. emerald.cominsight.

³¹Mehkar Sherwani, "Determinant of Halal Meat Consumption in Germany," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 23 April 2018, www. emeralinsight.com.

of *halal* label on the food packaging provides a sign that a product feasible quality is a basic consumer knowledge. Therefore, *halal* label has a psychological implication to the quality of food ingredients in Pakistan.³² Arab Muslim consumers' perceptions on halal food and their behavior toward *halal* label in big supermarkets in the UK could be analyzed using TPB (*theory of planned behavior*). The norm of subjectivity is the most influencing factor of *halal* product with *halal* label purchase for both consumers who have high and low awareness of Islam.³³ Halal certification in the Philippines also has a significant impact on the innovative performance of food companies. Performance improvement and innovation lead to market improvement. There is a relationship between performance improvement due to *halal* certification, and market performance.³⁴

Although individual Shari'a subservience is varied, in general, every muslim has a positive view of goods and services that can comply with Islamic law. Attitudes toward *halal* certification and *halal* literacy are some factors that determine the level of awareness and involvement of consumers towards halal certification. A Muslim with a high level of awareness and involvement would have a high probability of becoming a sharia loyalist who would only buy food, beverage and medicinal product with *halal* certification.³⁵

From the results of studies above, the *halal* product intention is based on the existence of religious belief and value. The existence of *halal fatwa* in Indonesia is pivotal due to the Muslims society and consuming halal products is one of the practices of Islamic teaching. Anthropological studies in general indicated that the character of religious people is always destined to seek and ensure that food that they consume will not impede their intimacy with God. According to Mary Douglas, in her book *Purity and Danger*, purity and impurity could not be united. Our bodies need to be clean from pollution if we want to be close to God.³⁶ Douglas Davies, in *Anthropology and Theology*, adds that Purity and Impurity are important for religious people regarding to the supernatural *presence*.³⁷ Febe Armanius, in *Halal Food: a History*, mentioned that consuming *halal* food as a form of piety and, throughout its history, *halal* issues have

³²Javeed Anam, "Conceptualizing the Relation Between Halal Logo, Perceived Product Quality and The Role of Consumer Knowledge," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 29 Oktober 2017, www.emeraldinsight.com.

³³Reham I Elseidi, "Determinants of Halal Purchasing Intentions: Evidences From UK," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 10 Maret 2017, 167–90.

³⁴Normia Akhmad, "Halal Certification Compliance and its Effects on Companies Innovative and Market Performanc," *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 23 September 2018, www.emeraldinsight.com.

³⁵Imam Basuki Salehuddin dan Muhammad Mukhlis, "Pemasaran Halal: Konsep, Implikasi dan Temuan di Lapangan," *Makalah*, t.t.

³⁶Mary Douglas, *Purity and Dangerous: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (Britania Raya: Routledge, 1996).

³⁷Douglas Davies, *Antropology and Theology* (Oxford Inggris: Bergh Publishers, 2002).

been driven by piety.³⁸ Moreover, Saba Mahmoud in *Politics of Piety*, speaking in the context of Egypt, the reason Muslims want to live in a halal framework is none other than to define their identity as Muslims, as the expression of piety, faith and message conveyer.^{39 40}

A Convergence between Commodification and Piety in Halal Certification

Halal phenomenon emerges at the meeting point of religion and economy. Some people even praise it for bringing new faith, root of belief, and helping the creation of an Islamic society where Islamic principles is implemented rigorously. On the other hand, some people see *halal* certification as a commodification of Islam and emphasize on overt behavior while ignore the intellectual and spiritual aspects of the deeper meaning and beauty of faith. Others worry that it would probably change the foundation of Indonesian Islam, which they see as a pluralist or tolerant, to be replaced by radical and puritanical Islam.

An increase expressed piety of Indonesian people through consuming Islamic products is seen by the scholars as the achievement of religion commodification. Symbolically, Islam has become an expansion of marketplace which is very potential for capital commodity. Therefore, the commodification of Islam has made significant changes in social, economic and religious life in Indonesia. The characteristics of Islam commodification in Indonesia have become a new trend and religious style in Indonesia. The character of Islamic commodification is marked by a premise which shows that the higher the level of piety in Indonesian society, the higher the level of consumption of Islamic products would be.

An assumption supporting the premise above is based on the study conducted by Yanwar Pribadi and Zaki Ghufuran in Serang and Cilegon. The study explains about the emergence of middle class Muslim groups who significantly changed the landscape of cultural and religious expression. The alteration could be clearly seen from economic market aspect of religion commodification (Islam), in various levels and aspects, interactions, competitions, and negotiations with the inevitable economic market penetration where Islam exploited as a commodity and how the followers justify to make it more sense.⁴¹ This study also explains about the relationship between Islam commodification and the economic market in the Muslim community of Banten in the cities of Serang and Cilegon. Islam commodification is a process where norms and values are exploited into a commodity in economic market which is produced, distributed, and consumed.

Rozaki states that there is a transaction between economic and faith (or religious symbols) which is produced and creating awareness of expressed religious

³⁸Armanius dan Ergence, *Halal Food: A History*.

³⁹Mahmoud, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*.

⁴⁰Kambiz Heidarzadeh Hanzae dan Muhammad Reza Ramezani, "Intention to Halal Products in The World Markets," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research in Bussiness* 1, no. 5 (Mei 2011): 1–7.

⁴¹Yanwar Pribadi dan Zaki Ghufuran, "Komodifikasi Islam dalam Ekonomi Pasar: Studi tentang Muslim Perkotaan Banten," *Jurnal AFKARUNA* 15, no. 1 (2019). 82-83. 89.

realization such as online fatwas, and the entertainment industry such as religious movies.⁴² Wildan Utama criticizes the religion commodification rapidly on underestimating religion into merely a matter of physical form and away from spiritual process. For example, the strong design of *halal* lifestyle encouraged by Dian Pelangi accelerated the expansion of religious lifestyle among middle-class Muslim communities in Indonesia. Dian Dwi Jayanto, in general, view the increase of piety in Indonesia merely as a symptom of religion commodification based on several premises: *first*, Islam as the majority religion in Indonesia; *second*, economic escalation among the growing number of middle-class Muslim communities. *Third*, the reality is well read and executed as a potential market for producing the needs of Muslim community. *Fourth*, symbolic narratives produced by capitalist that are emerged with Islamic values. Finally, the appearance which seems indicating the rise of expressed piety is nothing more than a religious commercialization success, not the piety improvement of society.⁴³

Faegheh Shirazi said that Islamic terms such as *halal* have become a label in marketing because its ability to increase purchase intention, not about the Islamic values philosophy. Based on that reason, instead of referring to Islamic values or the philosophy of *halal* concept, many industries have followed the *halal* certification trend to pursue profit. It becomes easy to explain why non-Muslim country such as Brazil is the largest exporters of *halal* food and beverages in the world. The Islamic brand becomes the resistance of Islamophobia industry, to reaffirm Muslim identity. In his conclusion, Shirazi emphasizes on the inherent absurd complexity in interpreting and distributing *halal* goods and the profit.⁴⁴

In political economic theory, there are two product values: (1) use value, the value of the product emerged from customer's satisfaction of need and demand, and (2) exchange value, which appears from the exchange value. The transformation from use values into exchange value is called commodification. For instance, the case of Zoya headscarf, the *halal* label of Zoya's headscarf is exploited into an exchange value and made it as a sale promotion. The commodification of *halal* label creates the illusion of good expression of piety when people use products with halal label. This results in excessive benefits for Zoya.⁴⁵

Identity Politics is we are what we eat. This concept assures that food and beverages may play an important role in a construction of social, political culture and

⁴²Rozaki, "Komodifikasi Islam (Kesalehan dan Pergulatan Identitas di Ruang Publik)." 202-203.

⁴³Dian Dwi Jayanto, "Membaca Fenomena Menguatnya Perayaan Islamisasi di Indonesia Pasca Reformasi," *Jurnal Kawistara* 10, no. 1 (22 April 2020): 101–115. 105.

⁴⁴Shirazi, *Brand Islam, The Marketing and Commodification of Piety*. 14.

⁴⁵Rizka Trisna Arianti dan Had Purnama, "Komodifikasi Kata Halal Pada Iklan Hijab Zoya versi Cantik Nyaman Halal," *Jurnal Lingar Studi Komunikasi* 4, no. 2 (September 2018): 160–69.

subjective religious identity.⁴⁶ Scholars identify a gap between artificially glorified formalistic-symbolistic piety on websites with piety integral in attitude, reasoning and behavior. This causes the emergence of the corrupt reasoning. The corrupt reasoning is a tendency to betray the Islamic substantive values while trading Islam as an accessory. After all, religious commercialization still puts demand as a strong determiner than the ideal religion. Therefore, the religiosity level of producers and consumers in the Islamic market is less important and they continue to trade Islam as an accessory. MUP's lack of transparent about *halal* certification benefits is the example of the corrupt reasoning. LPPOM MUI only needs to report to the head quarter although the money managed comes from the community. With monopolization of *halal* certification validation authority and lack of transparency in its management, the potency of corruption is wide open. Tempo magazine reported that there were a scheme behind the halal label in 2014 done by MUP's senior officer, which unfolded the additional funds spent by the Australian meat exporters for receiving the *halal* label.⁴⁷

Furthermore, the religion commodification supporters view Islamic consumption trend in this country as religiosity spirit on one hand and, on the other hand, as a religious practice which is trapped in a symbolic formality emphasizing merely on camouflage and imagery.⁴⁸ In addition, the need for *halal* products leads into a corporation which seems to make *halal* product as their main commodity. Cosmetic products such as a make-up, skin care and others are the examples. According to Lies Afroniyati, *halal* certification in various countries, both in Muslim and non-Muslim countries, is no longer simply for protecting Muslims from halal and haram substances but also has exploited to become a commodity. There are several reasons for this. First, this is based on the reason that *halal* certification could not be based only on trust; the state must act as a supervisor by making certification a mandatory tool for companies. Second, the implementation of halal certification in non-Muslim countries is of course an economic strategy. Third, there is a motive for obtaining profit from distributing halal products.⁴⁹

In addition, the supporters of the commodification theory point out that there is a strong competition in gaining the power to provide *halal* certification validation and its supervision. The pro-cons of UU-JPH is strengthened by the attitudes shown by each party. Hence, a *halal* assurance product is no longer the main priority in *halal* certification. Other interests, other than religious provisions, are more dominating. There is a motive behind MUI's efforts in defending *halal* certification issue.⁵⁰ Since

⁴⁶Muttaqien, *Globalisasi Keberagamaan Hibrida dan Komodifikasi Agama dalam Masyarakat Multikultural. Kata Pengantar buku Abdul Aziz Faiz, Muslim Perkotaan.* 169.

⁴⁷Irfan L Sarhindi, "Kesalehan Politis, Nalar Korup, dan Bola Salju Romy," Kesalehan Politis, Nalar Korup, dan Bola Salju Romy, 29 Maret 2019, m.detik.com.

⁴⁸Asmaul Husna, "Komodifikasi Agama: Pergeseran Praktik Bisnis dan Kemunculan Kelas Menengah Muslim," *Jurnal Komunikasi Global* 2, no. 2 (2018): 227–239. 231.

⁴⁹Afroniyati, "Analisis ekonomi Politik Sertifikat Halal oleh Majelis Ulama Indonesia." 38-39.

⁵⁰Afroniyati. 4.

the beginning, MUI has an autocracy to exploit the power of *halal* certification without a clear legal verdict. The administration requirement fee to acquire *halal* certification is Rp. 2.5 million to Rp. 5 million per product. This may become an evidence that the dominance of *halal* certification would draw some profits. There are ideological, economical, and political motives in *halal* certification.⁵¹

Extortion happens for several reasons. Firstly, there is no clear legal verdict from government to define a regulation of certification expense per product. No standardization of prices becomes a gap for MUI or certain parties to unilaterally determine the acquisition of halal certification. Secondly, there is a tendency for corruption during field inspections. Allegedly, the existence of the “unofficial” expense has become stronger. Also, there is no cost transparency from LPPOM and MUI regarding the expense of certification paid by the companies. There is still no report of the total registration of *halal* certification validation fees received by MUI.⁵² There are three matters related to *halal* certification in Indonesia: economic interests, religious sensitivity because it emphasizes the interests of Islam, and political interests of MUI and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.⁵³

Islamic consumption trend, which becomes a trend in Indonesia, could also be interpreted as religiosity increase to meet the spiritual needs of the Muslim community. Other perspective shows that this phenomenon has created other influences and interests in it. The euphoria of actualizing religious identity used by business people to exploit it as a commodity. Therefore, the sides of religiosity and business become blurred; religious practice begins to be trapped in the framework of symbolic formality that only puts forward camouflage and imagery. With its various components, religion has become “fertile land” that never runs dry to be explored and exploited in the form of products and services by religious capitalists in order to gain profits and political benefits.⁵⁴ When religion is commodified, this would reduce the religion value. Therefore, religion is only trapped in the framework of symbolic formality that only puts forward camouflage and imagery.⁵⁵

However, scholars argue that *halal* certification could basically be described as an answer to a basic need in Abraham Maslow's hierarchical theory, which is a need for security. The need for security is defined as the need to avoid diseases that infect a person after consuming *haram* products. In addition, *halal* certificates also carry a religious value in a product which satisfy the consumers because they have practiced the teachings of Islam, and as a form of *sharia* compliant.⁵⁶

⁵¹Afronyati. 47.

⁵²Afronyati. 48-49.

⁵³Jahar dan Thalbah, “Dinamika Sosial Politik Pembentukan Undang-undang Jaminan Produk Halal.” 385.

⁵⁴Husna, “Komodifikasi Agama: Pergeseran Praktik Bisnis dan Kemunculan Kelas Menengah Muslim.” 227-228.

⁵⁵Husna. 231.

⁵⁶Hanzaee dan Ramezani, “Intention to Halal Products in The World Markets.” 1.

The growth of *halal* market in Indonesia and the expansion of *halal* space are manifestations of increasing religious awareness. Because *halal* assurance is not only a matter of consuming food, drinks and expanding the *halal* market but also as a part of *sharia* obligations.⁵⁷

As a trading commodity, food has a big role in enhancing the national food reputation in international world and is also a source of foreign exchange. At the same time, food tranquility has to be received a serious attention. The establishment of *Halal* Product Assurance Law (UUJPH) aims to provide comfort, security, safety and certainty of product availability in consuming and using goods. Certification and label on food products are referred as measuring and control instruments to protect consumers from detrimental and dangerous substances.⁵⁸ Consuming *halal* food is a basic right of every Muslim. Apart from religious belief, there is a dimension of health, economy and security. Therefore, the state should be present to provide this basic rights of its people.

In Islamic view, the issue of consuming *halal* or *haram* is an important issue, moreover as a foundation of piety. Furthermore, food that is biologically consumed will be processed into the essence of life in the form of sperm or egg cells which then grow and transform into human fetuses as the next generation of parents and humans in general. Therefore, when it comes to consuming *halal-haram*, it means talking about descendants and future generations who would determine the future of humanity's civilization.⁵⁹

For Indonesia, the request of *halal* certification and *halal* label is very vital due to Indonesian large Muslim population. Large numbers of products processed through the factory's modern production technology make it difficult to assure their *halal-ness*. Therefore, it is necessary to have regulations and supervisions of *halal* products by strengthening the legal verdict and merging it with other legal systems. Besides, *halal* food cannot be separated from the purpose of Islamic law itself, which is to protect the benefit and reject harm. There are foods that are harmful to the soul therefore they are prohibited.⁶⁰

Consumption of *sharia* labeled is also an adaptation strategy for the Muslim community to face the modern day without abandoning their religious status. The escalation of products distribution in the domestic market is difficult to control due to the development of food technology, technological engineering, biotechnology and biological chemical processes. This encourages middle class Muslims to form their own identity by showing certain prominent attitudes, values and norms. *Islamic Consumption*

⁵⁷Syafiq Hasyim, "Indonesia's Growing Halal Market: Impact on the Economy," *RSIS: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies*, 2018, <http://hdl.handle.net/11540/9551>.

⁵⁸Asep Syarifuddin Hidayat dan Mustolih Siradj, "Sertifikasi Halal dan Sertifikasi Non Halal," *Abkam* 15, no. 2 (Juli 2015): 199–210.

⁵⁹Sulhan Abu Fitra, "Makanan Menentukan Kualitas Generasi dan Paradaban," *Jurnal Halal*, no. 113 (Juni 2015). 30-31.

⁶⁰Edi Krisharyanto, Ending Retnowati, dan Noor Tri Hastuti, "Regulation and Provisions for Supervision of Halal Products in Indonesia," *Jurnal of Legal and Regulatory Issues* 22, no. 1 (2019): 1–10.

trend becomes an inevitable part. In one hand, it is as a form of religion commodification to make a profit, and on the other hand, this phenomenon would rise the human religious bond. In other words, business and religion also may go hand in hand.⁶¹

Nonetheless, in the development of the *halal* market, there is a piety growth. In general, the jurists believe the need of *halal* issues legal standing. In piety based *sharia* escalation, the legislated law is regarded as a manifestation of Islamic awareness growth in Indonesia. *Halal* assurance is not only a matter of expanding the market, but also as an expression of piety in practicing *sharia* obligations. After all, market does not discuss about Islamic symbols, yet about producing attracting commodities to be purchased by consumers. This is the commercial side of the UUJPH.⁶² Modernity and global capitalism do not only necessarily confront Islam, but also negotiate and adapt to create a dynamic relation between Islam and capitalism.

Our main duty is to show that no matter how pure a religion, it always lands into materialistic matters which always becomes the issue of human beings today. In the relations of social capitalism and capital accumulation logic, there is no single thing which could not be exploited as a commodity.⁶³ Therefore, the assumption of the unification of *halal* certification and piety become an option.⁶⁴

Conclusion

The phenomenon of halal certification in Indonesia is interpreted by scholars in myriads of thoughts. Some scholars describe it as a form of religion commodifications with more profit-oriented and rather than referring to Islamic values or the philosophy of halal concept. The other scholars interpret the phenomenon as an effort to increase the spirit of religiosity among Muslims and as a form of expression of piety. In fact, there is contiguity between commodification and an expression of piety in halal certification. It could be interpreted simultaneously and find convergence. For this reason, the need to strengthen halal certification bodies and complete legal umbrellas is an urgent matter to maintain the existence of halal certification in its corridors.

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⁶¹Husna, "Komodifikasi Agama: Pergeseran Praktik Bisnis dan Kemunculan Kelas Menengah Muslim." . 235-237.

⁶²Hasyim, "Indonesia's Growing Halal Market: Impact on the Economy."

⁶³Roy Murtadho, "Agama Sebagai Komoditas: Musibah atau Berkah?," Agama Sebagai Komoditas: Musibah atau Berkah?, 23 September 2016, Harian Indoprogress.com.

⁶⁴Kamiruddin, "Fungsi Sosiologis Agama, (Studi Profan dan Sakral, Menurut Emiel Durkheim)," *TOLERANSI: Media Ilmiah Komunikasi Umat Beragama* 3, no. 2 (Desember 2011): 157–176.

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