

**RELIGION AND STATE COLLABORATION IN THE
SHARIA TOURISM
(THE STUDY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY WISATA
SYARIAH: KARAKTER, POTENSI, PROSPEK, DAN
TANTANGANNYA TEXTBOOK)**

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Sharia tourism is a tourism constructed for government's interest. Although it is for facilitate domestic tourism Moslem and foreign tourism Moslem, but in the practice, there is a commodification in sharia tourism.

This research focuses on political economy study in sharia tourism construction. The aims of this research are: a) to explain the forms of religion commodities in sharia tourism construction on *Wisata Syariah: Karakter, Potensi, Prospek, dan tantangannya* textbook; b) to explain authority role of MUI and Kemenpar in sharia tourism construction; and c) to describe who is the most advantaged in sharia tourism practice. This research uses political economy, commodification, and consumer society theory. Meanwhile, the type of this research is qualitative interpretative and the methods are interview, observation, and document analysis.

The finding of this research is that religion used as a commodity in the sharia tourism construction, replaced religion's role by government's interest. Therefore, government is the most advantaged.

Keywords: sharia tourism, political economy, commodification

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of sector contributes a lot of foreign exchange to a state. One of the use of the foreign exchange is to pay national debt. Thus, it can help a state toward national economy. According to Salma and Susilowati (2004: 155-156), quoting from Spillane, 1989 and Badruddin, 2000, the types of tourism are tourism for enjoy the ride, tourism for recreation sites, tourism for cultural, tourism for sports, tourism for large trade affairs; and tourism for the convention.

Furthermore, there is a new concept of tourism in Indonesia, called sharia tourism. It combines tourism and sharia. Sharia is meant the Islamic law. Sharia tourism is the trip by visiting a particular place and due regard to faith, worship, muamalah, manners, and morals. Sharia tourism is presented for those who still want to pay attention toward sharia in tourism, including consuming kosher and also remained not violate Islamic law, and not leave worship when traveling. By means of sharia tourism, Indonesia is expected to facilitate tourists from within the country and also abroad, particularly from the Middle East.

One of the efforts in developing sharia tourism in Indonesia undertaken by government is publishing textbook, entitled *Wisata Syariah: Karakter, Potensi, Prospek, dan tantangannya* written by Hery Sucipto and Fitria Handayani. Hery Sucipto is a founder and owner of Sharia Travel Consulting Group and also a coordinator of the Movement of Indonesia Halal, while Fitria Andayani is a journalist. In those book, stated that Kemenparekraf and MUI are working sharia tourism in Indonesia (Sucipto & Andayani, 2014:11). From this statement and also the statement from Wonderful Indonesia site that both of Kemenparekraf and MUI who are working this project, it rises an assumption that Kemenparekraf holds MUI in developing sharia tourism viewed Cultural Studies as an arena of power used by state in an attempt to make changes (Bennett in Barker, 2011: 8). In this context, MUI is a tool to gain legitimacy for the state because it has authority over the establishment of sharia in Indonesia and also used as a commodity by the state to serve as Halal Fatwa that will be used to sell sharia tourism. Furthermore, it implicates for the state's opportunity to gain religious legitimacy in efforts to carry out its mission to earn foreign exchange by developing sharia tourism. Thus, it results a question for the researcher that whether MUI just want towed Kemenparekraf in the construction of sharia tourism without giving feedback to Kemenparekraf and to what extent MUI negotiates on it. In this research, I want to see how the forms of commodification of religion in the book of *Wisata Syariah: Karakter, Potensi, Prospek, dan tantangannya*. Then, what about the authority roles of religion and state in sharia tourism, and who is the most benefited in the construction of this.

Moreover, this research is not the first research discuss about sharia tourism. There are at least three researches discussed about sharia tourism. They are *Promoting Islamic Tourism in Brunei: Through Customers Understanding Towards the Syariah Compliant Hotel Concepts* by Mohamed, *Sharia-Compliant Hotels in Egypt* by Ezzat, et.al., and *Impacts of Religious and Pilgrimage Tourism in Rural Areas: The Case of Iran* by Purtaheri, et.al. From those three studies, the study

of sharia tourism is still limited in the study of sharia hotels and tourist pilgrimage and religious tourism. Meanwhile, this study will be examined by the researcher focus on the study sharia tourism broader scope, which consists of sharia hotel, sharia fashion, sharia spa, and other aspects which supports sharia tourism. Then, from the three studies it can be concluded that the first study focused on the factors visitor Muslims against the concept of Sharia-compliant hotel, a second study focused on clarity about the meaning of SCH and about the challenges faced in developing (SCH) in Egypt, and the third study focused on the impact of pilgrimage and religious tourism. Of course, researcher do research that would not address the link between Muslim visitors and sharia tourism, the challenges faced in developing sharia tourism, or impact of pilgrimage and religious, but rather the struggle in sharia tourism itself. The struggle on the role of religion and state authorities in the construction of sharia tourism that each have a different form of legitimacy. Thus, this study is interesting to study to see how the two (religion and state) that each have authority in their respective roles in constructing the so- "Islamic Tourism" and give a new perspective to the construction of sharia tourism.

Theoretical Framework

- **Sharia Tourism**

Sharia tourism is a travel with regard to morals, worship, and the belief that obtain happiness in this world and hereafter. In this sharia tourism, there is a difference between sharia tourism with conventional tourism and religious tourism. Ngatawi Al zastro (2012 in Sucipto & Andayani, 2014: 44) classifies differences of those three tourism as follows:

Comparison among Sharia Tourism with Conventional Tourism and Religious Tourism

No	Item Comparison	Conventional	Religious	Sharia
1.	Object	Nature, culture, heritage, culinary	Places of worship, historical heritage	All of them
2.	Destination	Entertain	Increase spirituality	Increase religiosities spirit by entertaining
3.	Target	Touching the dimension of satisfaction and pleasure lust, solely for entertainment	Spiritual aspect that can soothe the soul. Merely seek inner peace	Fulfill the desires and pleasures as well as raising awareness of religion

4.	Guide	Understanding information so that it can attract tourists to attractions	Understanding history of character and location of a tourist attraction	Make tourists interested in the objects at once evoke the spirit of religiosities tourists. Able to explain the function and role of sharia in the form of happiness and inner satisfaction in human life
5.	Worship Facilities	Just a complement	Just a complement	Being an integral part of tourism objects, rituals of worship become part of the entertainment package
6.	Culinary	General	General	Specific kosher
7.	Relation with Society in the Environmental Attractions	Complementary and solely pursue profit	Complementary and solely pursue profit	Integrated, interaction based on the principles of sharia
8.	Travel Agenda	Ignoring time	Matter the time of travel	Noting the time

- **Political Economy Seen by Cultural Studies**

Sardar and Van Loon (2002 in Babe, 2009: 64) argues that one of the characteristics of Cultural Studies is aimed at reviewing the issue from the point of cultural practices and its relationship with power. The goal is to reveal the power relations and examines how these relationships affect and shape cultural practices (*“Cultural Studies aims to examine its subject matter in terms of cultural practices and their relation to power. Its constant goal is to expose power relationships influence and shape cultural practices”*). Furthermore, Barker argues that cultural practices have now been commodified by the corporate giant industries and Cultural Studies took part in the movement for change (Barker, 2011: 15). The implication, commodification that occurs in the social sphere today become one of the concerns of Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies saw that the commodification of cultural practices has economic motivation can bring benefits by a certain group of people. Therefore, Cultural Studies willing to dismantle the practices behind the construction of meaning on the basis of the interests of a particular group of people.

- **Political Economy**

Mosco (2009: 3) defines political economy as follows:

The study of control and survival in social life. Control refers specifically to how a society organizes itself, manages its affairs and adapts, or fails to adapt, to the inevitable changes that all societies face. Survival means how people produce what they need to reproduce themselves and to keep their society going.

Through the political economy approach, it can be seen that the construction of sharia tourism produced and consumed under capitalism, as well as sharia tourism here constructed to serve the interests of the rich and powerful. People in power in this context is Kemenparekraf (state).

One of the important concepts' Mosco is commodification that will be the subject of this study. According to Mosco (2009: 132-133), commodification and commodities are two things that have a relationship processes and objects. Various forms of commodification has emerged in the social life of the community, where the community has commodified aspect or element so that it becomes a commodity. According to Mosco (2009:133), *commodification is the process of transforming things valued for their use into marketable products that are valued for what they can bring in exchange.*

- **Religion Commodification**

Fakhruroji (2012:205) argues that in the commodification of religion, the religion of a particular cultural context is reproduced in the cultural framework for requirement expresses the symbolic significance and their economic-social. Commodification is indeed created and presented in a market economy and the explosion of postmodern religion. Commodification here, puts the religion as the goods, where the public can take it through the function of religious spirituality. Thus, the commodification of religion is the process of transforming value to religion (as a guideline of life based upon the belief to the God) became interchangeable values by using functions that are adapted to the needs of man over religion.

- **Consumer Society**

The presence of sharia tourism on the surface gives rise to the existence of the consumption of sign. In modern society, a person who consumes objects, automatically it also consumes the sign and in the process, someone defines itself as who (Ritzer, 2010:137). Baudrillard, 1972/1981:38 (in Ritzer, 2010:137-138) says that: "through objects, every individual and every group

found a place each in an order, all of them trying to shove this order based on personal lines. Through a stratified, community object ... so everyone is kept at a certain place. " This indicates that the object is consumed determine a person's class. Those objects are useful to distinguish themselves with the other communities. Thus, consuming objects indirectly signified that we are equal with other people who consume those objects, and different from the others that consumes other objects. This is called "code" by Genosko (Ritzer, 2010:138).

Materials and Methods

To obtain a valid research results, required research method that appropriate to the research problem to be solved. This study uses qualitative methods, which data analyzed is data that is not shaped figures. Technique of data collection consists of in-depth interviews, document analysis, and observations. The data was obtained from the textbook "*Wisata Syariah: Karakter, Potensi, Prospek, dan tantangannya*". The results of interviews and observations are analyzed with the critical political economy perspective.

Results and Discussion

- **Religion Commodification in Sharia Tourism**

The process of commodification of religion is going on with reproducing a particular cultural context of religion in a cultural framework for requirement then expresses the symbolic significance and economic-social (Fakhruroji, 2012:205). Indonesia as a State of inner Muslim Ummah circumstances is utilizing the Muslims to serve as opportunities to build sharia tourism. Religion is used to bring economic reproduced for the country. For example, Islamic fashion that was constructed in the book reproduces the religion by way of emphasizing that the shape of the 'Awrah shall close Muslim fashion, but is not emphasized in the Muslim fashion must also close the curve of the body of Muslim. In addition, Islamic finance as supporting aspects of the constructed sharia tour in the book reproduces the religion by way of implementing the operations referring to the provision in the Quran, but did not depart from the Hadith that forbids all forms of transactions which bring in riba (interest). If Islamic banking and islamic fashion with this concept is increasingly spreading in Indonesia, then the advantage gained by the State through tax will be increasingly accumulated amount. On the other hand, if it is happened, religion would become

"victims". A religion that became the guiding Muslims and must be considered from all aspects, even sliding by the interests of the State. The sliding by interests here it means some conditions that exist in Islam is applied if in accordance with the interests of the State, and eliminated if it is not in accordance with the interests of the State. If fashions are not fashionable (monotonous with one type of clothes are in accordance with the Islamic Shari'a), then there would be no expansion of the market in the field of Muslim fashion and if financial transactions which are constructed does not contain riba (interest), then there would be no income to the State, and even country will lose because of the need to hire employees who worked in the financial world. Thus, it is clearly visible how the interests of religion was defeated by the interests of the State.

In the commodification of religion, as revealed by Fakhruroji (2012:205), commodification put religion as the goods, where the public can take it through the function of religious spirituality. In the example of a halal restaurant, sharia spa, halal cosmetics, and sharia hotel, people consume goods through the function of religious spirituality. Muslims choose halal restaurants because the food and drinks are served in the restaurant are safe to be consumed as it does not violate the Sharia. Spa selected to maintain Sharia the nakedness of the Muslims so as not to look the other persons. Halal cosmetics is chosen to keep the health due to cosmetic ingredients are halal contains no chemical elements or the elements of a pig. Sharia hotels selected in order that its activities did not abandon obligations in worship and not to violate the Sharia. This kind of function of religious spirituality is utilized by the State in domestic and foreign menggaed to consume or use sharia tourism services and products. Here, obviously religious position placed as goods that can be sold.

Seeing this phenomena of Sharia tourism concept like that, then it can become a threat. This is in accordance with statement of Turner (2008:34) as alleged as follows:

The main threat to religious belief is actually the commodification of daily life. People accept or reject a belief system rather than rational reasons that because the system is coherent or not, but rather because of the beliefs or not relevant to the needs and Affairs of everyday life.

Muslims who consume or use the sharia tourism services and products are not because it is coherent to her tour, but the tour

of Sharia are relevant to their needs as devout Muslims against Sharia. Sharia tourism is judged relevant to Muslims because it can facilitate them in the tour that doesn't violate the Sharia. This is what will bring a threat to Islamic religion because religion is no longer as a set of beliefs and practices related to sacred things and creating social bonds between individuals but rather as goods that can be sold. The statement is the same as that expressed by Durkheim on commodification of religion (Durkheim: 1961 in Turner 2003:22).

- **Forms of Power and Negotiations in the Sharia Tourism Construction**

The formation of sharia tourism in Indonesia is inseparable from the hands of Kemenpar and MUI. The task of the Kemenpar in the sharia tourism are doing FGD (Focus Group Discussion), conducting cooperation with various parties, and doing a signing tour. Meanwhile, the MUI is giving the task of dissemination through seminars, workshop, writing, as well as provide halal certification. It is as expressed by Ahmad Muhsin (MUI Secretary Yogyakarta):

“Tugas MUI tidak hanya melakukan sertifikasi halal, namun juga sosialisasi melalui seminar dan loka karya, melalui penulisan, sertifikat halal...” (Interview, 20 February 2015)

Socializing done by MUI through seminars, workshop, and the writing aims to introduce to the public about the importance of giving the halal label from the MUI for its products. The use of kosher products labeled is indeed being encouraged by MUI. MUI expects that any attempt in the sharia tourism business have to have halal label from the LPPOM MUI and is major supporter for sharia tourism, as revealed by Ahmad Muhsin:

“Kita mengharapkan begitu... Ya paling enggak semangatnya ada, dilaksanakan juga semampunya, tapi kan itu sudah diumumkan... Jadi label itu sudah melekat pada provinsi... Siapa pun yang berada di Provinsi DIY itu harus memahami ini adalah Jogjakarta... Kita, dari MUI memiliki motivasi kuat untuk mendorong wisata syariah...” (Interview, 20 February 2015)

“Jadi pendukung utama untuk wisata syariah ya LPPOM kita ini. LPPOM ini bergerak di objek wisata syariah... Kedua, tentang hotel syariah... Kalau sudah banyak ditangani restoran/rumah makan... Jadi kita usahakan untuk betul-betul ada labelisasi halal...” (Interview, 20 February 2015)

MUI halal labelling is mandatory for running a business tour. To get the halal label, business owners have to spend funds, amounting to IDR 0.00 – IDR 5.000.000 costs (depending on the seriousness of the big industry) and to continue must be updated every two years. The following quote Ahmad Muhsin of the importance of the halal label update:

“Jadi label halal hanya berlaku dua tahun... Setiap dua tahun harus diperbarui supaya ingat... Kan berapa lama kalau enggak diingatkan, lupa... Biayanya enggak mahal... Jogja ini terkenal yang paling murah di Indonesia. Jadi banyak orang-orang yang di luar Jogja itu meminta kesini...” (Interview, 20 February 2015).

From the excerpt above, Muhsin’s reasons regarding the extension of the halal label is not clear. The reason “so remember” is not a strong reason why business owners should extend the halal label on its products. This indicates that MUI utilizing business owners as the fields of income/profit continue. In carrying out its mission to promote the halal label, MUI Yogyakarta turns to do a partnership with local government, universities, laboratories, and other agencies.

- **Sharia Salon-Spa Practice**

In the realm of Sharia tourism in practice, RSCSM business owners accumulate their capital with an expanding market, where not only a Muslim can enjoy products and services RSCSM, selling beauty products imported from the United States, but also open up opportunities for the franchise to prospective employers. Thus, it is seen that the ideology of the RSCSM owners not solely to uphold Islam as a religion that pays attention to the nakedness of his people, but there is also the benefit of profit. The circumstances in which these people are now many who are attracted by the lifestyle of Glibt RSCSM owners need to expand its market, not only at the salon-spa, but also halal beauty products as well as open up opportunities franchise. Of course, here the owner of salon-spa RSCSM benefits from the large number of

sources of income. However, on the other hand, he still must pay tax on business that he founded.

One who escaped from a business in the field of tourism is the absence of Islamic halal certificate from MUI. Sharia salon-spa RSCSM have no MUI halal certificate because according to him, the halal certificate not too important. Salon owners assume that service with a friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the salon muslimah, GLBT, as well as the use of halal products is enough to gain the trust of consumers that such Sharia salon. Therefore, it is not halal certificate is crucial here. It is regarded as a form of resistance to the MUI, where salon-spa RSCSM despise what is said by the MUI if setting up a business in the field of tourism. From here it can be seen that there is a practice of resistance in the realm of tourism.

- **Sharia Tourism Result in Consumption Practice**

Consumers of sharia salon-spa is not fully use the services of a salon-spa Islamic religious reasons. Consumers tend to use the services of sharia salon-spa because salon provides treatments that are not found in other salons and do more on care because the health needs as well as appearance. It is as expressed by Fani (home consumer Pretty Healthy & Muslimah) as follows:

“Saya memilih melakukan perawatan di RSCSM karena ada beberapa layanan yang cukup memuaskan dan tidak dapat ditemui di salon yang lain. Seperti akupuntur wajah, dan faciel wajah...” (Interview, 25 May 2015)

“Ada motif kesehatan sih, lebih bersih, dan nyaman juga disana, kalau soal agama sih nggak juga ya...” (Interview, 25 May 2015)

“Nggak ada latar belakang yang gimana-gimana sih... Seneng aja ke salon, kerasa banget quality time buat diri sendiri, dan lebih refresh...” (Interview, 25 May 2015)

“Manfaat yang didapatin dari segi kesehatan selama ini saya lihat disini peralatannya bersih dan terapis dan perawatnya cukup terpercaya dan baik... Kalau dari penampilan, manfaatnya ya muka lebih bersih sih jadi lebih PD lah... hahaha... Kalau manfaat agama, emmm... apa ya... Kalau agama mungkin karena lingkungannya seagama dengan saya, kemudian disana ada mushola, dan lain-lain... Jadi lebih nyaman...” (Interview, 25 May 2015)

According to the interview above, it is seen that religion is not the main motive for someone to do the treatments at the spa-salon, but there are other motives, like more on health, appearance, lifestyle, and to fill leisure time. Religious motives as just added value from the facilities provided by the salon-spa, but health, appearance, and style of life is the primary needs of consumers in doing treatments at the salon-spa. Here, the sharia salon-spa as the object. Baudrillard states that when a person consumes objects, then he consumes a sign, and in the process he defines himself (Baudrillard in Ritzer, 2010). So, when a person consumes sharia salon spa, it consumes signs by the venue and she also defines herself as an individual what kind. Consumers do care in the salon-spa Sharia, he was not (only, mostly) doing body care, but also more obtained what sharia salon-spa offer to consumer. For example, consumers are part of the people always pay attention to appearance, follow the Sharia, and include people who are busy in her everyday, so he need for relaxing. Indirectly, this is what is meant by defining themselves as individuals like who.

CONCLUSION

Sharia tourism was initiated by Kemenparekraf (recent is Kemenpar) working with the MUI, contain elements of the commodification of religion. This can be seen on the *Wisata Syariah: Karakter, Potensi, Prospek, dan tantangannya* textbook, which religion is reproduced for state's profit. Examples: Islamic fashion and Islamic banking. Islamic fashion reproduce religion by way of emphasizing that the shape of the 'Awrah shall close Muslim fashion, but is not emphasized in the Muslim fashion that should close the curve of a woman's body. Islamic finance reproduce religion by way of implementing the operational provisions that refer to the Quran, without regard to the existence of usury. State taxes gained through both of these increasingly accumulated and religion (Islam) became "victims", because of the role and function of the religion (Islam) have been slide by the interests of the State.

Sharia tourism implies authority role Kemenpar and MUI. Kemenpar represents the purpose of state and religious purposes represented by MUI. The State's role of promoting sharia tourism and do work closely with the relevant parties, and religion plays a role as a stamp for halal products and services. Although just as halal stamp, religious also take advantage of opportunities from the State, where he also was able to get profit from the halal stamp. This is the form of the negotiations

conducted by the MUI that is towed by a Kemenpar in Sharia tourism construction.

In practice, Kemenpar, MUI, and Sharia tourism businessmen indeed benefitted from the financial standpoint. But here's the most benefited are the state (Kemenpar) because the State getting the most revenue in comparison to MUI and Regent ventures.

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