Between Taboo and Virtue: Islamohumorism in the Reconstruction of Muslim Identity and Piety through Social Media

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Abstract

The discourse on the intersection between Islam and humor has evolved especially since 9/11, but is still considered a peripheral matter in Muslim societies. But comedians can be classified as organic intellectuals—as Gramsci contended—who take a particular role in social change. Rather than viewing humor as a counternarrative toward Islamophobia in Muslim minority countries, as many Western scholars have discussed, 'Islamohumorism' in Indonesia somehow shows a different type of polarization, with some Muslims considering humor as a taboo making fun of with religion, while others regard it simply as a means to relax and even evoke piety. This paper aims to showcase the conflicting responses toward Islamohumorism in Indonesia and the impact of these responses. Furthermore, this paper also attempts to examine how comedy frames Muslim identity and stimulates public piety. I focus on discussing three forms of comedy. This paper portrays the impact of Islamohumorism on Indonesian Muslims through social media. I argue that humor is not inherently taboo and does not contradict Islamic principles. Instead, it serves as a quintessential narrative that critiques societal shortcomings and inequalities. Moreover, it has the potential to foster a sense of community, amplify Muslim identity, and even endorse piety.

Keywords: crosshijaber, Islamohumorism, public piety, identity

Introduction

The rapid growth of the internet and social media platforms in this modern era has had a remarkable influence on all aspects of human life. It facilitates worldwide communication, convivial access to data resources, the availability of an enormous amount and overwhelming flow of information. The virtual world provides a pseudo-meeting places that extend the social world, creating new knowledge opportunities, and serving as a place to share views with a broad audience. The significant advantages offered by social media are utilized by digitally-savvy individuals for their own benefit, regardless of whether this is good or not for everyone else. For Muslims especially, digital media is not merely perceived as a negative phenomenon, as has been argued by some scholars who view it as a cry for attention, expression of narcissism, and so on (Boursier et al., 2020), but also having a positive impact on self-representation, expressing piety, and inspiring other people. Thus, social media is utilized as a tool for propagating Islamic values (Ar.: *daʿwah*, Ind.: *dakwah*) given it can transmit religious messages to broad audiences in an effective and efficient manner. Lou and Yuan (2019) contend that social media can reinforce shared perceptions between creators and viewers, thus *daʿwah* through social media can have a significant impact through simple methods of commenting, reposting, liking, and subscribing to content. The computer-literate content creators, primarily Muslim youths, play a significant role in *daʿwah* through these platforms by presenting a typical youthful sense of *daʿwah* that is creative and visually appealing.

Youth involvement in *daʿwah* through various creative methods as part of modernity provides a fresh lens for the development of Islamic practices in society. These youth seek in global modernity new ways to contextualize Islam that resonate with their youthful

tastes. By using social media, they convey *da ʿwah* via limitless creativity, utilizing various innovations. They produce content featuring entertaining elements, funny stories, and *da ʿwah* themes which follow the latest trends. This pathway can draw greater attention from social media users and even go viral among the broader general public. In addition to attracting millennials, who are the largest users of social media, creative youthful *da ʿwah* packaging is aimed at making *da ʿwah* more engaging and the messages contained within more understandable (Mazaya and Novitasari, 2021). One of the creative formats used to spread *da ʿwah* on social media is humor and comedy content. Humor is considered a form of communication that may provoke laughter. Attardo (2010) defines humor as all categories in the form of objects as well as events that evoke laughter, amuse, or are perceived to be funny. Humor can be presented in various formats such as satirical news, situational comedy, stand-up comedy, parodies, memes, and so forth. These formats can be developed as avenues to proselytize and spread *da ʿwah* values. Preachers sometimes insert humorous elements into conventional proselytization to draw the attention of audiences and maintain their focus. The relationship between humor and religion is not a recent invention; it has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Michael, 2013). However, perceptions of humor's relationship with religion has evolved over time. Humor can be found in religious scriptures, medieval literature, and Muslim folk stories, but at other times Muslims have been regarded as 'those who do not know how to be funny', suggesting an incompatibility between Islam and humor.

Humor is not solely about laughter and amusement. Humor can be directed to complex topics and more serious issues. It can generate public engagement, which in turn influences social change. Humor is created by highlighting and criticizing the incongruity of the

social order overtly as well as covertly and subsequently sharing this with the public and eventually prompting resistance and a sense of community to a certain extent. Some scholars have highlighted the role of humor in social justice. Quirk (2015) contends that humor is a significant agent of change in its ability to spread new ideas. It is able to produce social criticism by challenging and renegotiating societal norms and create a kind of shared community. Meier and Schmitt (2017) argue that humor is perceived as a source of social commentary, alternative perspectives, counterculture, and resistance toward nonconformity. Furthermore, it plays a role in amplifying the cultural identity of marginalized groups (Krefting 2014; Lowrey and Renegar 2017). Chattoo (2018) concludes that humor's influence on social justice is framed in terms of: drawing attention to something, persuasion, offering a way to understand complex issues, breaking social barriers, and prompting message sharing. This aligns with Gramsci's view on organic intellectuals, which proclaim the needs and interests of groups. Thus, comedians can be classified as organic intellectuals because they play a role in social change, combat stereotypes, and promote intercultural dialogue, especially in Muslim minority countries.

The discourse surrounding humor in Muslim society may remain a peripheral concern, but discussion of it has increased following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US. Humor or comedy became a means of rejecting discrimination and negative stereotypes developed by the majority population. The ways that Muslim Americans deal with stereotypes and the reality of being both Muslim and American in the post-9/11 context is a unique area for analysis. When Muslims were associated with racial stereotypes, masculine violence, fanaticism, and barbarism, American Muslims responded to this pressure and racism by taking steps to hide their Muslim identity in public spaces and altering patterns of observable "Muslim" behavior such as dress or speech (Michael, 2013). But some sought

to counter this pressure and embody social justice through comedy by improving their image with outsiders as well as convincing insiders and coreligionists to resist societal shortcomings.

Islamohumorism, or the mixing of humor and Islam, in Indonesia presents a different problem, receiving different responses depending on the audience. Some people consider Islamohumorism to be taboo and claim it makes fun of religion, while others regard it simply as a source of amusement and relaxation, not discrediting Islam. It is not surprising that some pious people consider this kind of humor to be taboo—something that is unacceptable based on religion or custom—because some humor, especially stand-up comedy—as one of the most popular comedy formats on television and social media—uses explicit language and only fulfills the audience's desire to laugh without considering the effect on the audience, sometimes stretching as far as condemning people or even religion. However, some comedians conversely synthesize values of humor and virtue, enabling comedians to provide benefits and lessons for the audience. At any rate, this method can attract greater attention from audiences who are eager to be entertained as well as learn from the content.

As I alluded to earlier, this research aims to showcase the conflicting responses toward Islamohumorism in Indonesia and the impact of those respective responses. Islamohumorism itself refers to the intersection between Islam as a sacred matter and humor as a mundane matter, which is articulated in the form of proselytization, entertaining digital content, and so on. In order to discuss the competing views among Indonesians toward Islamohumorism and its impact, I have chosen three typologies of humor represented from the following case studies: a stand-up comedy routine by Dzawin Nur in his YouTube segment "*Kuliah Antum*", a *crosshijaber* parody produced by @holaofadlan on

Instagram, and memification on the @haram_house account on Instagram. These accounts are comedy accounts, which are primarily aimed at profit motives rather than proselytization. Yet, their contents imply many *da ʿwah* values that can have an impact on audiences, to a certain extent. Their strategy seems to be working, with these accounts averaging over 100.000 followers.

To date, the discourse of Islamohumorism in the digital sphere remains relatively unexplored. Most scholars have focused on explaining the humor of Muslim minorities in the United States in the aftermath of 9/11. Michael (2018) has outlined the compatibility of Islam and humor but utilizes diachronic historicity as the approach for his study. Thus, I intend to explore this phenomenon from a digital perspective. This research utilizes the netnographic approach, by which I gather data online from accounts, content, and comments and interviewing consumers of this content. Besides, to explore the impact of humor, I borrow the uses and gratifications theory of Katz and Blumler (1974) as a framework, through which they contend that viewers have full agency to select content and explain how people use media for their own needs and obtain satisfaction when their needs are fulfilled. They also classify the impact of humor on viewers.

In short, this paper attempts to answer the following research questions: What are the responses of Indonesian Muslims toward Islamohumorism in the digital sphere? Are humor and Islam compatible with each other? What are the impacts of Islamohumorism on viewers? This article will begin with the comparison between Islamohumorism in Western countries in the post-9/11 and in Indonesia, followed by the discussion of the Dzawin Nur, @holaofadlan, and @haram_house accounts. Subsequently, I analyze the impacts of Islamohumorism on Muslim viewers.

Islamohumorism in the Western Media: A Counter-narrative to Islamophobia and Gelotophobia Labeling

Negative portrayals of Muslims in Western media have been a long-standing area of academic study. After the events of 9/11, Muslims were discriminated against and viewed as a common enemy. This pressure led some Muslims to conceal their Muslim identity. But others chose to resist the discrimination and stereotypes with humor. Humor or comedy by American Muslims is a unique response to the post-9/11 environment, in which Muslims criticize the stereotypes and realities of Muslim American life. This humor positioned Muslims as being the latest in a long history of American minority groups using public humor to address and contest the terms of American social life and national belonging. For American Muslims who were subjected to dehumanizing stereotypes, humor was a new and culturally significant space to process negative impacts through laughter (Michael, 2013). This was a symptom of the American Muslim's integration into the social and cultural structure of American life.

Several comedy acts emerged after 9/11, such as Allah Made Me Funny (2003), the Axis of Evil Comedy Tour (2006), Little Mosque on the Prairie (2007), and so on. These acts aimed to inform outsiders about Islam as well as encourage insiders or coreligionists to work together to improve their image among outsiders. Muslim American comedy has the potential to deliver important social messages to both non-Muslims and Muslims regarding contemporary debates on American social belonging and Muslim-American debates on how they relate to their groups in the post-9/11 environment. Humor also acts as an educational tool for the Muslim community, aiming to create role models. These Muslims use comedy as a form of constructive criticism—either explicitly or implicitly—of their coreligionists' 'wrong-doings' and articulate

moral behaviors and decent values (Thonnart, 2016). When addressing insiders, the comedians promote their ideal of the American *ummah* through education and encourage a united community transcending ethnic and racial divisions. They prompt their audience to defend their interests as Muslims in the American mainstream.

This shows that humor can lead to social change. The comedian as an organic intellectual is able to encourage their group to fight against social injustice. Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks* elaborated that organic intellectuals must have the ability to address the needs and desires of the community. They represent the community and acknowledge that they are products of the community. They should voice the interests of the group, defend the perception of it in public, and provide it with social, cultural, and political leadership (Amarasingam , 2010). The comedy itself can engage complex social issues by simplifying and making them accessible. I argue that humor can be an effective intermediary to criticize the social order and fight against social inequality.

Besides humor serving as a counter-narrative for discrimination and Islamophobia after 9/11, it has also been utilized to oppose those who claim 'Muslims do not know how to be funny'. It is worth noting that the relationship between humor and Islam, especially in the twentieth century, has fluctuated. As explained earlier, Islam and humor were seen as being compatible with one another in the post 9/11 environment in order to combat the negative stereotypes. But, events following this, such as the attacks in New York, Madrid, and London, the Danish cartoon controversy and the teddy bear affairs, and the violence perpetrated by Islamist groups such as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Boko Haram have brought back age-old fears and spread topical clichés: Muslims are 'gelotophobic fundamentalist terrorists' (Michael, 2013).

Gelotophobic here refers to a fear of laughter, meaning that Muslims were seen as lacking an understanding about humor and were depicted as barbaric and cruel. These events also led to debate about the relationship between Muslims, Islam, and humor. This debate began in late 2005 when a Danish newspaper, *The Jyllands-Posten*, published cartoons that portrayed the Prophet Muhammad as a terrorist, prompting protests and demonstrations by Muslims. A similar response took place when French weekly satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* published explicit images of religious figures, including the Prophet Muhammad, in an attempt at satire (Miles, 2015). It engendered the impression that Muslims are not capable of being funny, that humor is not permitted in Islam, and that there is no space for humor in the Islamic tradition. But, Muslims eventually used humor to prove that those assumptions were incorrect.

Islamohumorism in Indonesia: Between Taboo and Virtue

The intersection between Islam and humor in Indonesia showcases a different type polarization, namely between those who consider it taboo and making fun of religion, and others who regard it simply as a means to relax and even evoke piety. Those who regard humor as taboo when it is connected to Islam see humor as a profane matter that contradicts the sacredness of Islam. Furthermore, humor is perceived as people laughing at religion and underestimating it. In addition, some humor especially stand-up comedy—as one of the most popular comedy formats on television and social media—often uses explicit language and the material used only serves entertainment purposes without considering the effect on the audience, sometimes extending to condemning individuals or even religion. Thus, some argue that Islam and humor are incompatible. The argument that humor and jokes are not part

of Islam or the Muslim experience is sometimes based on problematic assumptions around Muslim history and social life.

Figure 1 *Viewers response toward a Kuliah Antum video by Dzawin Nur. The comment shows that the viewer does not like the content because they think that this content discredits religious tenets.*

Conversely, those who support the relationship between Islam and humor contend that the use of humor in *daʿwah* is especially helpful in making *daʿwah* more understandable and accessible for audiences. Many preachers have utilized this approach. Some comedians and digital content creators also try to synthesize humor and values, enabling comedians to provide benefits and lessons for the audience instead. This approach can also attract greater attention from audiences eager to be entertained as well as take lessons from the content. To some certain extent, the content can promote awareness and encourage audiences to practice the virtuous values promoted by the content creators.

Figure 2 *Viewers response to a Kuliah Antum video by Dzawin Nur. This post shows that the viewers feel the content is beneficial for them.*

I argue that humor is not taboo in Islam, as long as it does not contain harsh language and offend other people. Michael (2018) outlines the existence of Islamohumorism throughout history, from the Prophet's time until the contemporary era. Humor and jokes are constant features of Muslim lives. Far from being a recent development, humor has historically been important in Muslim experiences and literature. Today, this tradition is often overlooked by assumptions of Islam and Muslim life, which question the relationship between humor, laughter, and Muslim identities. The

idea that humor is not permissible in Islamic tradition, or that Muslims are unable to take a joke, is spread more by cultural theses of Islam and Muslim history as backward, uncivilized, incompatible, or inferior to the "West," as argued by Samuel Huntington and others, than by the realities of Muslim history and practice. Jokes and humor have always been aspects of Muslim practice, and they serve various functions, such as to affirm and criticize religious positions, and to explain the reality of Islam to non-Muslim audiences.

I will now discuss three social media accounts that represent Islamohumorism. It is worth remembering that these accounts are not *daʿwah* accounts, but they are comedy accounts that imply virtuous values in their content.

Kuliah Antum by @DzawinNur: *Ustadz* Stand-up

Dzawin Nur Ikram is a prominent stand-up comedian in Indonesia. In 2014, he won third prize in the fourth season of the Indonesia Stand-up Comedy (SUCI) program held by one of the private television channels and in 2017 also won third place in the Maharaja Lawak Mega, one of the biggest comedy competitions in Malaysia (Romansyah et.al, 2020). As of 8 July 2022, his YouTube has reached 1.89 million followers. Ikram, or as he is known via his YouTube segments, Ustadz (Ar.: *ustādh*) Nur Cahya, became a hot topic of conversation as a result of a video he uploaded during Ramadan in 2022 entitled "Kultum" or "Kuliah Antum" (a wordplay on "Seven-Minute Lecture"; to become "Your Lecture"). In the video, which has since been removed from YouTube, Dzawin tried to explain various concept of lectures and proselytization that are often misinterpreted in the community. For instance, he reminds the audience to not confuse random sentences spoken in Arabic

with religious scriptures, to be wise in choosing friends, methods for reducing one's anger, and so on. The content is packaged as comedy but still hits on core themes, which is not surprising, given Dzawin's background as *santri*—a student of an Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*). Indeed, the content he presents is often related to *pesantren*. Furthermore, his comedy persona conveys dense material quickly but in an understandable format and includes critiques of social phenomena.

Figure 3 *Dzawin did parody as ustadz and convey material about Arabic language*

Kuliah Antum segment triggered various responses from viewers. Some of them commented that the videos in the series were amusing and enjoyable. Others commented about the core themes of content and sometimes cited Qur'ān and hadith (sayings and deeds of the Prophet) or even include their own argument and religious knowledge. Some posted comments advising him to not make content parodying religious teachers (*ustadz*), saying that

this was making fun of Islam and undermining religious teachings. Interestingly, some of them considered him to be an *ustadz* (see **figure 4**) and praised his teaching method. Arguably, some of viewers considered him to be a legitimate preacher and authority on religion. This shows that even though he is a comedian, he could be considered a source of authority by providing content related to Islam, aligning with Nisa's (2018) argument that technology can create alternative sources of religious authority.

Figure 4 *The viewers leave positive comments in his video.*

I interviewed to several viewers to understand the reason behind their decision to engage with t Dzawin's content. Ahmad (pseudonym, 23) said that he was a long-standing follower of Dzawin. When he came across the *Kuliah Antum* content last year, he watched it just for entertainment purposes. When I asked about

the impact from watching *Kuliah Antum,* he explained, "The content boosted my mood. I do not see it as *da'wah* content because when I open his channel, I expect humor and comedy. But, his content to some extents encourages awareness of certain topics, for instance, the advice to not consider everything in Arabic to be sacred scripture." In line with this comment, Wahyu (pseudonym, 25) also said that he watched *Kuliah Antum* to relax and solely as for entertainment purposes. In addition, he believes that humor and Islam are not contradictory and Dzawin does not make fun of religion in this video because viewers can understand that the context is just as a joke. Meanwhile, Ayu (28) said that she was able to learn Islamic values from the content and compared it with Sunan Kalijaga, one of the renowned saints who introduced Islam to Java centuries again and conducted *da'wah* using traditional wood puppet (*wayang*) performances.

Holao Fadlan: Crosshijaber Parody

Holao Fadlan started their career as a content creator on TikTok. They made several videos about various professions, such as cashiers, gas station employees, pharmacists, and so forth. Their videos went viral because of his acting talent, and they soon reached 500,000 followers on Instagram. They identify as non-binary, saying this is the reason why they dress as they please. On some occasions, they performed a parody of Mamah Dedeh, a famous female preacher in Indonesia, successfully imitating Mamah Dedeh's humorous expressions and performance. Interestingly, although they post content including *da'wah* values, they present themselves as a 'crosshijaber'—a biological man who wears hijab—even though traditionalists prohibit mixed dress codes between sexes. There are no comments criticizing their donning of hijab and their status as non-binary on their YouTube

account. This shows that viewers are more inclusive regarding gender and perhaps care about the content only.

Figure 5 *Fadlan conducted the parody of Mama Dedeh*

My interviewees provided slightly different responses to Fadlan's videos. Tohir (27) maintains that, regardless of Fadlan's appearance as crosshijaber, he doesn't have a problem with the content because Fadlan discussed virtuous values. Tohir also said that it was a useful form of entertainment. In addition, Nana (25) said that Fadlan's parody was a way of promoting Mama Dedeh's *da ʿwah* to a broad audience, especially among millennials. From Fadlan's case, it is possible to argue that content including *da ʿwah* values can affect people regardless of how it is presented.

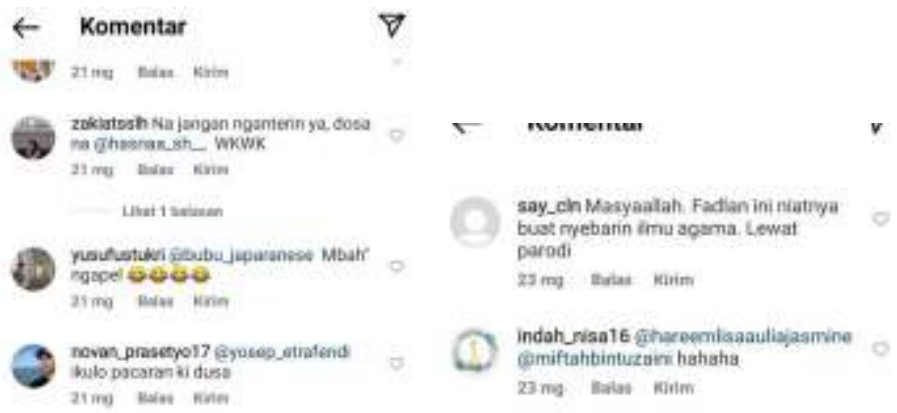

Figure 6 (left) *The comments of viewers show that they are Fadlan as aware that dating (khalwat) is sinful*; **Figure 7 (right)** *This comment shows support for a preacher.*

Haram_house: It is Halal Memification

Haram_house is a meme and viral video account with more than 100,000 followers that is managed by Ibrahim. Many of the videos and memes are reposted from other accounts but the account also posts inspirational quotes and calls to donate to charity. Most of the memes satirize societal phenomena which violate Islamic tenets or otherwise provide advice on how to avoid things prohibited in Islam. The followers of this account leave diverse comments with some posting laughing emojis or replying with humorous comments, others criticize the memes, and others still comment that they have learnt something or have an increased awareness about the particular topic. Fahri (pseudonym, 25) said that the memes were relevant and included *daʿwah* value beyond just humor. He added that this account appears to be focused on reducing Islamophobia in the West. "This account will have a greater religious impact on lay people," he argues.

Figure 8 (left) *The haram_house account*
Figure 9 (right) *Comments from haram_house followers*

Some comments indicate that the memes reminded followers to do good deeds and avoid bad deeds. As figure 10 shows, one meme displays that a Muslim should run away from things on the internet and social media which are prohibited (*ḥarām*) in Islam. This meme clearly contains *daʿwah* values and can have an impact on followers.

Figure 10 *A meme on @haram_house*

Islamohumorism and Religiosity

After discussing about the Islamohumorism through the three social media accounts outlined above, we can see that Islamohumorism in social media has diverse impacts on viewers. Katz et. al.'s (1974) uses and gratifications theory helps us understand individuals' goal of using social media. They maintain that people actively choose particular sources of information and entertainment to serve individual psychological needs, such as learning or regulating moods. Sometimes people who seek out comedy and entertainment in social media also discover social issues and the comedy somehow serve to influence social change by drawing attention to complex social issues, breaking social barriers, and encouraging sharing with others. Furthermore, they argue that the audience has an active role in linking gratification and that media choice rests with the audience member.

Subsequently, according to their research, there are five broad goals for media use. First, are audiences who want to be informed or educated. As the accounts mentioned above show, some viewers acknowledge that they learnt something new about Islamic knowledge or were otherwise encouraged to be more pious or adhere to Islamic provisions. For instance, the comments on the haram_house meme "stay halal astagfirullah" or comment on Fadlan's "Do Not Date" video suggest that the audiences are aware that they have to guard themselves against adultery, in accordance with Islamic tenets.

Second, are audiences who want to identify with characters in the media environment. Islamohumorism has the potential to amplify Muslim identity. As I alluded to earlier, Muslims, like any other group, are subject to stereotypes and misconceptions. Humor can be a powerful tool challenge and subvert these stereotypes,

providing a way for Muslims to assert their own narratives and identities. They can express their unique identity overtly to foster understanding with others and reshape public perceptions. Furthermore, Muslims on social media use humor to share everyday situations, cultural nuances, and religious practices that resonate with a broad audience. This fosters a sense of community and shared identity among Muslims who relate to these experiences. For example, @haram_house memes are mostly related to Arab life, which is depicted as an inclusive and progressive society. Content depicts the daily life of Muslims, Muslim public figures, and images expressing Muslim thoughts and feelings through memes. This means that the content projects the uniqueness and positivity of Muslims. Therefore, it is understandable if the purpose of the content is to promote Islam broadly and combat Islamophobia. It also reinforces a sense of unity among Muslims who relate to this content and belong to a shared experience. In addition, the fact that Fadlan's content is accepted by the general public, even though it performing *tashabbuh* (spreading Islamic virtue via non-Islamic methods), shows that Indonesian Muslims are more inclusive toward gender matter. In this instance, hijab, which is a religious symbol reinforcing Muslim women's identity has been desacralized and turned into a lifestyle and commodified good. The commodification of hijab on social media has led to it being trapped in mainstream popular culture and massive cultural trends.

Third are audiences who want simple entertainment. These three accounts are clearly focused on entertaining audiences either with stand-up comedy, parody, and memification. As a result, they obtain profit and fame from uploading content. This actually reflects the commodification of religion, where content creators use Islamic values or symbols for profane matters or business. In some cases, this commodification results in a superficial understanding of religious values. But in other cases, it also

simplifies worship for adherents and Islamic principles are more strictly upheld. Furthermore, the accounts discussed accentuate the humor in their contents so that many viewers just watch their content for entertainment and enjoyment. For instance, around 30% of Dzawin's *Kuliah Antum* videos consist of *da ʿwah*, while the remainder is comedy content. As a result, there is a strong comedy element to his content.

Fourth are audiences who want to enjoy social interaction. Islamohumorist content evokes a sense of community through which viewers can feel that they have shared thoughts as one religious community (*ummah*). Furthermore, they can interact with each other in the comments section, sharing their views about the topic. To some extent, Islamohumorism can mobilize people with shared thoughts to critique societal shortcomings and in turn become agents of change. Dzawin, as a stand-up comedian, touches on many issues pertaining to social phenomena and satirizes them through his content.

Fifth, audience audiences who want to escape from the stresses of daily life. This linked to theories of the origin of humor, which argue that one reason why humor exists is as a source of relaxation. Humor functions to release tension from the pressures of life. Thus, many audiences watch Islamohumorist content to reduce their stress and improve their mood.

In addition, Islamohumorist content also highlights the fragmentation of authority. There are overt examples of this when some viewers leave comments, such as "Thank you, *Ustadz*" or "This *da ʿwah* is suitable for millennials". This indicates that some viewers consider the content creators to be a source of Islamic learning. These viewers can enjoy humor and religious lessons in

the same content. While comedians are not traditional religious authorities, they might offer a unique perspective or challenge to conventional thinking through their comedic approach or deliver purely religious content using comedy and wit, so that their content is more engaging and easily understood by viewers.

Conclusion

The combining of humor and Islam aims to achieve various purposes. Some Muslim minorities created Islamohumorist content to combat negative stereotypes from the majority population, especially after 9/11. Others made content in this vein merely to attract attention from social media users. Responses to Islamohumorism have also differed. Some Muslims consider the mixing of humor and Islam as making fun of religion, because religion and humor are not compatible. Conversely, others maintain that Islamohumorism is not taboo. I argue that humor does not contradict Islamic principles. It serves various functions within society such as an intermediary for critics of societal inequalities and as a voice for social change. Besides, humor can be used to spread Islamic virtues broadly. Islamohumorism has an impact on viewers. Most viewers of Islamohumorist content see this content as a source of entertainment and a means to relax. Yet others feel inspired to be more religious by encouraging them to be pious and motivating them to avoid bad deeds. Furthermore, they also can feel a sense of community as one *umma* with shared thoughts and experiences. This content enables them to interact with other Muslims and share their thought with each other. Humor can also amplify their identity as Muslims who are more inclusive. Finally, Islamohumorist social media accounts can serve as religious authorities, through which some viewers view their content as source of Islamic knowledge. Thus, Islamohumorism leads to the fragmentation of religious authority to some extent.

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