Jihad in Visual Artwork of Muslim Punk Subculture

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Abstract—Punk Subculture present in Indonesia in early 1990’s in some big cities such as Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta. His presence triggered by big flow of information in music industry through magazine, as well as television stations such as MTV and Channel V. Then Punk Subculture had increasingly popularity after American punk band Green Day was allowed to hold a concert in Jakarta at the beginning of February 1996. Then, in 2001, there was appearing seeds of Islam Punk Movement led by Ombat aka Mohammad Hariadi Nusution, a member of grindcore/punk band from Jakarta, Tengkorak, then this movement popularly named as One Finger Movement in 2010. This movement was born as a new kind of jihad against Westernization which is contrary with principle beliefs of Islamic culture in punk scene. In later years, it appears the others Islamic movements such as Punk Muslim Community, Ghuraba Militant Tawheed and Bogor Muslim Hardcore Community. The development of Islam Punk Subculture not only identified by their development of music industry, but also in visual artworks that spread in their merchandises, publications, and promotions, from electronic media to printed medium. Beside of their functions as publication and spreading the information, the mediums also contain visual artworks that reflects ideological thoughts of muslim punk. This research focused on how a visual image give us picture about something. Especially about the concept of jihad according to Muslim Punk’s understanding. It also look at how the media showing a visual image that constructs meaning of “jihad” through a cultural concept that is different from the dominant culture – like Western culture and capitalism- that usually identical in mainstream media.

Keywords—jihad, subculture, punk, Islam, visual art

1. INTRODUCTION

This research entitled “Jihad in Visual Artworks of Muslim Punk Subculture” is a research revealed the concept of jihad on visual artworks produced by the muslim punk subculture in Indonesia. Visual artworks generated by muslim punk subculture is also product of visual culture, hence this study in domain of media studies and cultural studies. It consists a series of images charged social content that used to communicate something from the creators, therefore such artworks can be said to be media [1].

In first wave of sociological study, the subculture concept was further elaborated in the 1960s and 1970s through the concepts of counterculture and contraculture, among others [2]. With the passing of the hippies in the early 1970s, however, the youth subculture concept moved away from mainstream sociology and into criminology, where deviance remains a key analytic variable. The sociological study of subcultural youths has since developed in North America within the field of criminology. Criminological work often takes youth culture at face value, focusing on correlations and effects rather than on cultural processes[3], although some criminologists remain analytically interested in culture [4]. Most problematic from a subcultural studies perspective is the criminological interest in the links between subculture and crime [5], which represents youths as a social problem.

Subcultural youths did engage in resistance, it was allegedly most obvious in their style, which was seen as a symbolic resource for youth insomuch as the dominant culture dismissed, marginalized, or rejected its appropriateness [6]. This is the major methodological difference between the American and British traditions of subcultural studies: instead of an ethnographic approach, this study primarily grounded in semiotic analyses of style. The semiotician’s job was to deconstruct the taken-for-granted meanings that were attributed to subcultural objects and practices. This deconstruction required the semiotician to interrogate how taken-for-granted meanings were created, distributed, and consumed. The meanings of cultural objects and practices arose through hegemony as the ruling and working classes struggled over definitions of reality [7]. Within this struggle, subcultures appropriated and inverted cultural meanings, often through the consumption of clothing, music, and other leisure commodities. Through ‘rituals of consumption ... the subculture at once reveals its “secret” identity and communicates its forbidden meanings. It is basically how commodities are used in subculture which marks the subculture off from more orthodox cultural formations’ [8]. From this perspective, all meaning was suspect – even the subcultural youths themselves did not always understand what their objects and practices ‘really’ meant. Only the trained semiotician could see the ideological dimension of subcultural style.
The physical appearance of visual artworks in youth culture like Punk Islam tend to be appreciated better than any existing meanings behind them. The community is more accustomed to looking at its artificial aspects only, without digging deeper into the relationship between any related signs which are used or the messages that are represented. The nature of that kind of image is referred to everyday symbolic and expressive practices [9].

On the other hand, an image also has a nature as textual practices or visual dialectics on society [10], where the image forms the cultural construction of society through relationship of visual culture representation. This study focused on the visual artwork as visual imagery, which is a visual selected as representation of social content.

The development of human civilization will be in line with the development of its visual culture. Outside the context of art studies and entertainment studies, visual culture also adopts many other sciences. It happens because the adaptive nature and flexibility of the people toward new things and to apply broadly into science and technology.

Visual technologies such as photography, video, television, and others that exist around us has been presenting the view of the world by the way of translating the world in a visual form. They interpret the world that described with a variety of different ways. Therefore, a visual image not only refers to the ability of human beings to see something, but the visual image is a vision constructed in different ways, on how people see something, how a man can be, allowed or made to look at something, and how a person see something visible and non-visible. It can be said also that it was a scorpic regime which refers to what is seen and how to view it as a cultural construction [10].

Visual which become part of social life called as visual culture. As Sturken and Cartwright define; visual culture as cultural aspect manifested in visual form like printed materials, film, video, television, advertising, photos, news images, science image and visual image [11]. Visual image as visual culture used as a form of visual communication by personal or certain groups. The chosen visual that they use is the transformation of an idea which is placed and used as a form of messages that can be read. These are phenomena related to visual artworks produced by Islamic underground subculture as one of the visual image that it may has hidden meaning inside the picture, especially about the concept resistance to be explored.

Development of the underground movement not only identified in the music aspect, but have seemed to development visual arts produced by this movement through various merchandises, publications, and promotions, in electronic and also printed medium. Beside of their functions as publication and spreading the information, the mediums also contain visual artworks with specific characteristic of underground subculture.

According to John A. Walker [12], visual image that express an ideology of cultural artifacts and bares certain patterns as signifier called visual ideology. It because of the visual image is a tool in production of meaning and ideas about belief system that is characteristic of certain class or group through visual.

This research focused on see how a visual image give us picture about something. Especially about “jihad” of muslim punk subculture in Indonesia, and also its ideology.

II. JIHAD IN ISLAM

Jihad in its meaning is ‘to struggle’ as a general description. Jihad derives from the word jihād, which means at-ta'b, fatigue. The meaning of jihād fi sabīlillāh, struggle in the way of Allah, is striving to excess in fatiguing the self, to exhaust the self in seeking the divine presence and in bringing up Allah’s word, all of which he made the way to paradise [13]. For that reason Allah said: And strive hard (jihādītu in (the way of) Allah, (such) a striving is due to Him.[14]

It is essential to understand that under the term jihādī come many different categories of jihād, each with its specific context. The common understanding of jihād to mean only war is refuted by this tradition of the Prophet’s: A man asked the prophet “which jihād is best?” The Prophet said, “the most excellent jihād is to say the word of truth in front of a tyrant.” [14]

The fact that the prophet mentioned this jihād as “most excellent” means that there are many different forms of jihād.

According to Syaikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawy [13] in his book Fiqh Jihad, he concludes that there is a clear distinction between jihad and qital (fighting), as the command to engage in jihad was revealed in Makkah where there was no fighting, but rather jihād of da'wah (preaching) through the Qur'an, (And strive against them with the utmost endeavour with it (the Qur'an)) (Al-Furqan 25:52) [14]. The word is also used in the Qur'an and Sunnah with various meanings, including exerting oneself in resisting the enemy, resisting the devil, resisting one’s desires, etc. Thus the word jihād is much wider than just fighting, for jihād, as Syaikh Yusuf quotes from Ibn Taymiyya, “can be with the heart, by calling to Islam, by countering invalid arguments, by advising or facilitating what is beneficial to Muslims, or by one’s body, that is fighting” [13].

III. METHODOLOGY

This research using textual analysis method. Textual analysis is analysis that moves started from...
are at least six aspect users. According to Arthur Asa Berger the sign also influenced visual aspect of production techniques texts. Role of the researcher is more broadly interviews. Not limited to connect between the narratives that are obtained through in-depth interviews are narratives of questions and answers. Data collecting technique for this research are using 2 methods, following:

1. Looking for the data in the form of visual artworks that are used in a variety of media by one of muslim punk community, Ghuraba Militant Tauhid. The Data obtained in the form of visual image taken from t-shirts, CD sleeves and posters.
2. Indepth interview with designer/ producer of the images, and Secretary General of Ghuraba Militant Tauhid. The Data obtained from this indepth interview are narratives of questions and answers.

The analyze method for the data in this study is looking at the relationship between a text with other different texts. This method is known by the term intertextuality. Intertextuality is a concept expressed by Julia Kristeva [15], related to how a text linked with other texts.

In this study, text (visual image) will be viewed based on its relation to other texts, i.e., the narratives that are obtained through in-depth interviews. Not limited to connect between the visual image with description text answers, but more broadly. It will also be linked with the socio-political-economic-cultural context in society. The role of the researcher is as a connector between the texts.

The process of definition of a visual image need a variety production techniques in of visual sign or visual aspect which is related to the characteristics of media that used. Beside determined by media, the sign also influenced by cultural context of its users. According to Arthur Asa Berger [16], there are at least six aspects of the signs former to be considered in any analysis or the reading of the text. The sixth aspects are the color, size, space, contrasts, shape, smoothness of texture (grain) or details.

**IV. Results**

A. War On Opinion As New Shape Of Jihad in Modern Era

In modern era, implementation of Jihad not only based on salaf ‘ulama views, but also on contemporary ulama views who allow to use all possible medium to make counter opinion against enemy. Jihad is not only define as war (qital), Jihad against nafs (desire), and Jihad against shaitan, but also Jihad in making counter opinion against western culture and thoughts. This kind of Jihad reputed as relevan in contemporary era because Islam must face globalization era of information and communication. Same with Ibn Taymiah who said that Jihad can be in many ways, “can be with the heart, by calling to Islam, by countering invalid arguments, by advising or facilitating what is beneficial to Muslims, or by one’s body, that is fighting”.

B. ‘Cultural Jihad’ Adopted from Western Culture

The resistance messages against enemies are not delivered by mediums that are not commonly used in da’wah, for example public speeches and books, but also using some vehicles which is adopted from western culture, like music, fashion and urban art style in visual. These vehicles were expressly adopted because the targeted audiences were very close with Western culture, so the messages would be easily accepted by them. In addition, the using of these vehicles is limited as a medium to deliver the resistance messages, not more than it. It is allowed in Islam as long as there is not any contradiction in principle beliefs of Islamic culture.

C. Depict Assertiveness of Jihad Without Reduction

One of uniquely findings in this study is that there is no reduction on depictions of Jihad to the punk subculture segment. Strict and firm nuances (according to mainstream media usually called “extreme”) are still clearly visible in the visual artworks. If such visuals delivered on target segments of lay people, it must be responded to rejection. Punk subculture can accept this kind of visual easily because their background is familiar with the militancy on their own ideology (such as anarchism, straight edge, ect). So, when they see the militancy of the resistance in the Jihad, it does not make them feel awkward to receive it.
V. CONCLUSION

Jihad is an important worship in Islam. However, its implementation can be divided into a variety of forms according to the conditions and the needs. When jihad is understood and implemented by the subculture of punk Muslims, it can adjust to the culture and to its condition, as long as it does not conflict with Islamic law. The depiction of how the jihad is understood by the muslim punk subculture can be seen on how this subculture do visualization in their media.

First, they understand that the most relevant jihad in the modern era is countering negative opinion spreaded by enemies of Islam. Second, jihad using the cultural approach that is adopted from the West is not a problem, as long as it does not have any conflict with shari'a law. Third, firmly and strictly representations of jihad are more accepted by muslim punk subculture, because the basic characteristics of the punk culture is militant counter culture.

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[14] Al-Quran Al-Karim