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Religious Commodification in Branding: A Semiotic Analysis of Instaperfect's Instagram Content

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Abstract

The commodification of religion in branding practices has become a prominent phenomenon in contemporary consumer culture, particularly in how religious symbols promote commercial products. Brands have increasingly adopted religious imagery and values to appeal to specific market segments, especially in Muslim-majority regions. This study examines how Instaperfect, a beauty brand, commodifies Islamic elements in its branding on Instagram, focusing on integrating of religious symbols with commercial ideals. The research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a content analysis approach, using John Fiske's semiotic framework to analyze eight Instagram posts from Instaperfect, published between January and April 2023. Data was collected through a literature review and visual-textual analysis of the selected posts. The results reveal that Instaperfect blends religious symbols with luxury branding to construct an aspirational identity for Muslim women, thereby commodifying religious values. The study highlights how Islamic values such as *halal* and modesty are reframed to align with capitalist ideologies, turning religious devotion into a commercialized identity. These findings emphasize the growing intersection of religion and consumerism in digital branding.

Keywords: *Religious Commodification; Branding; Instagram; Religiosity*

Komodifikasi agama dalam branding semakin banyak ditemui dalam budaya konsumerisme saat ini, terutama dengan penggunaan simbol-simbol agama untuk menarik perhatian konsumen. Banyak merek yang kini memanfaatkan citra agama untuk menjangkau pasar tertentu, khususnya di negara-negara dengan mayoritas Muslim. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana Instaperfect, sebuah merek kosmetik, mengkomodifikasi elemen-elemen Islam dalam strategi branding mereka di Instagram, dengan fokus pada cara mereka menggabungkan simbol-simbol agama dengan nilai komersial. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan analisis konten, serta kerangka semiotika John Fiske untuk menganalisis delapan unggahan Instagram Instaperfect yang dipublikasikan antara Januari hingga April 2023. Data dikumpulkan melalui studi literatur dan analisis visual-teks dari unggahan yang terpilih. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Instaperfect memadukan simbol agama dengan branding mewah untuk membangun citra aspiratif bagi perempuan Muslim, yang pada gilirannya mengkomodifikasi nilai-nilai agama. Penelitian ini juga mengungkap bagaimana nilai-nilai Islam seperti halal dan kesederhanaan diposisikan ulang untuk sejalan dengan ideologi kapitalisme, menjadikan religiusitas sebagai identitas komersial.

A. INTRODUCTION

Commodification is a process through which entities, including religion, are transformed into goods or services for exchange value, often detached from their intrinsic value and adapted to meet consumer needs (Fakhruroji 2005). This phenomenon is evident in branding practices, where symbols, values, and identities are utilized to create a marketable identity. Within contemporary consumer cultures, religious commodification transforms religion from a spiritual and ethical framework into a tool for branding and commercial gain. This study examines this process in the branding practices of Instaperfect, a beauty brand under PT Paragon Technology and Innovation, as represented on Instagram.

Branding, defined as creating and shaping a product's identity in consumers' minds through names, symbols, designs, or a combination thereof, often intersects with societal structures and cultural values, including religion (Pratama 2022). Social media platforms, such as Instagram, amplify this process by providing a visual medium for disseminating these brand identities (Johana et al. 2020). Instagram has evolved beyond photo-sharing into a strategic platform for businesses to engage audiences, promote products, and construct ideologies (Kusumadinata et al. 2022). Instaperfect leverages this medium to integrate Islamic symbols into its branding practices, contributing to the broader discourse on the commodification of religion.

Previous studies have explored religious commodification in beauty brands. Maulidiyah (2018) found that Wardah subtly incorporates Islamic values into its branding, whereas Garnier adapts Islamic elements more selectively to resonate with Indonesia's Muslim consumers. Similarly, Annafis (2022) analyzed HNI honey's use of Islamic symbols, such as Quranic verses and halal certification, to create an ideology aligning its products with Islamic values. Kholqiana, Auzianin, and Azzahra (2020) identified three strategies for religious commodification in Wardah

advertisements: Islamic iconography, influential Islamic figures, and textual messaging referencing Islamic teachings.

On an international level, studies such as Hurd (2019) have highlighted the global rise of religious branding, emphasizing how religious symbols and narratives enhance market appeal across different contexts. Similarly, Einboden (2020) examined the interplay between consumerism and religious identity, underscoring how digital platforms mediate these dynamics. On Instagram specifically, Zulli and Zulli (2022) noted that visual branding strategies rely heavily on emotional engagement, aesthetics, and cultural resonance, including religious themes.

While these studies provide valuable insights into the commodification of religion in beauty brands, most focus on well-established brands like Wardah and Garnier, whose strategies predominantly rely on traditional advertising and broader religious symbolism. There remains a gap in understanding how newer entrants like Instaperfect employ distinct visual branding strategies on social media to construct their identities, particularly in the context of Islamic commodification. This differentiation is crucial, reflecting evolving practices in the digital branding space.

Unlike Wardah and Garnier, Instaperfect's approach is characterized by a more nuanced and visually driven branding strategy on Instagram. Existing studies have not adequately explored how visual mediums, especially Instagram posts, integrate religious symbols to craft a specific brand ideology. By analyzing Instaperfect's Instagram content from January to April 2023, this study addresses this gap and contributes to the academic discourse on the intersection of religion, consumerism, and digital media.

This research is significant because the commodification of religion extends beyond marketing tactics; it reflects and influences societal dynamics, particularly regarding the role of religion in shaping consumer

behavior and identity (Einboden, 2020). Investigating Instaperfect's branding practices sheds light on how digital platforms mediate the relationship between religion and commerce, offering critical insights into the construction of social identities in contemporary consumer cultures.

B. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method, focusing on text analysis using John Fiske's semiotic framework. The qualitative approach is chosen for its ability to interpret and explain the symbolic meanings embedded within media content, particularly in Instaperfect's Instagram posts. By examining these visual and textual symbols, this research aims to uncover the ideological and representational strategies that Instaperfect uses to commodify Islamic elements within its branding practices. The goal is to understand how religious symbols and values are integrated into a consumerist narrative, which blends faith with commercial ideals.

Data collection for this research was carried out in two main phases. First, a literature study was conducted to build a theoretical foundation for understanding key concepts such as commodification, representation, and ideology. The literature review involved analyzing books, journal articles, and other scholarly sources, which helped identify gaps in existing research and provided a framework for interpreting the media content. This study of relevant literature was essential for preparing the research and for situating the analysis of Instaperfect's branding practices within broader academic discourse.

For the empirical analysis, Instagram posts from the Instaperfect account were systematically examined. The research corpus consists of eight Instagram posts published between January and April 2023, each containing elements of religious commodification. These posts were explicitly chosen for their integration of Islamic symbols and practices with

commercial branding strategies. The selected posts are as follows: (1) a post titled "*Halal* Fine Dining Place Recommendation," (2) a collaboration campaign with the Muslim women's clothing brand Si.Se.Sa, promoting "*Halal* Glam Makeup and Glam *Syar'i* Attire," (3) a post featuring a Muslim woman with her eyes closed, as if in prayer, (4) a post depicting a Muslim woman reciting the Quran, (5) a post showing hands holding prayer beads towards the sky, (6) a post featuring quotes from *Ustaz* Ali Hasan Bawazier, (7) a portrait of Istiqlal Mosque, and (8) a post titled "Instaperfect Remarkable Reflection." These posts form the core data for the content analysis and were selected for their clear representation of how religious symbols are commodified within the brand's marketing strategy.

Theoretical Framework

A prominent scholar in media studies, John Fiske developed a semiotic theory emphasizing the analysis of signs and codes in media, particularly television. According to Fiske, understanding media requires analysis at three levels: reality, representation, and ideology. The reality level includes aspects such as appearance, costume, expression, and the physical setting presented in the media. The representation level focuses on media production techniques, including camera usage, editing, and narrative construction. Meanwhile, the ideological level relates to the values and beliefs underlying the media content (Fiske 1987).

Fiske argued that media not only reflects reality but also constructs meaning through specific codes. He emphasized that audiences play an active role in interpreting media messages, with interpretations shaped by their social and cultural contexts. Therefore, the meanings derived from a media text are plural and can vary from one individual to another. This challenges the notion of a fixed or singular meaning embedded in media texts, positioning audiences as co-creators of meaning (Fiske 1989).

Additionally, Fiske introduced the concept of "semiotic democracy," which refers to the audience's ability to produce their meanings and pleasures from media texts. He argued that in modern society, individuals can interpret and use media according to their needs and experiences, thereby challenging existing power structures. This idea underscores the participatory nature of media consumption and its potential for social resistance and transformation (Fiske 1992).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before analyzing and discussing how this commodification of religion operates through Fiske's Semiotic Analysis, the author will first describe each of the eight Instaperfect contents on Instagram one by one.

1. *Religious Symbol and Commodification in Instaperfect's Content*

a. *The Post of "Halal Fine Dining Place Recommendation"*

On slide 1 of this post, the reality level shows a white plate, a white cloth, a shiny knife, two pairs of shiny spoons and forks, and a cream-colored tray. This post uses a high-angle technique and lighting from above. An inscription also reads "*Halal Fine Dining Place Recommendation.*" This post is completed with a caption that reads, "*Halal* is our way of living. Here are recommendations for *halal* fine dining restaurants in Jakarta to fill your weekend, Dearest. Does anyone know any other recommendations?" At the level of representation, the whole equipment looks luxurious, classy, and exclusive, as shown by the image and the sound of the text, namely "*Halal Fine Dining Place Recommendation.*" The text and caption also connote that this advertisement is intended for rich Muslims. At the ideological level, there is a process of slanting the word "*halal*" which states that Instaperfect products are *halal* products that must be used in luxurious places such as fine dining. So here, there has been a process of commodification of religion

through a visual display of a combination of elements, namely images and writings that are ideological, namely capitalism, because here it contradicts religious values, which should teach simplicity, not luxury.

On slide 2 of the “*Halal Fine Dining Recommendation*” post, at the level of reality, objects are shown, namely a neatly arranged wooden table, a wooden chair with a red sofa seat, a wooden chair with a gray sofa seat, a flower vase containing red roses, and a black vase containing white flowers, sprinkled with rose petals. There is also a large glass that stretches from the bottom to the top. The words “1945 Restaurant @ Raffles Hotels.” This photo was taken using a long shot and top-light lighting. At the level of representation, there is represented a place to eat that has a luxurious concept, as seen from the use of large glass in the restaurant room. The sprinkling of rose petals also adds to the impression of luxury and the use of red and gray colors on the chairs. This also represents that the place is for Muslims who have above-average income. The use of long shots in the take also connotes that this restaurant has a large and magnificent capacity. At the ideological level, the *Halal Fine Dining* recommended by Instaperfect is a hotel. That way, Instaperfect recommends a place that has a luxurious connotation and leads that Instaperfect products are *halal* products that must be used in luxurious places such as fine dining.

On slide 3 of the *Halal Fine Dining Recommendation* post, at the reality level, there is a table containing white plates, white cloths, glasses, vases containing flowers, round lamps, a pair of cutlery and knives, white tablecloths, wooden chairs, large gold curtains, wooden shelf cabinets, wall lamps, yellow light bulb table lamps, mosque dome-shaped doors, the words “Al Nafoura @ Le Meridien Hotel.” The picture was taken with a long shot. At the level of representation, this post represents a luxurious restaurant. It can be seen from the use of large curtains and dangling to the restaurant floor with a golden color that adds to the impression of luxury. This restaurant uses yellow light bulbs that make a warm but luxurious

impression. The existence of *mosque* dome-shaped doors, white brick walls, and large curtains connote that this restaurant uses the Middle Eastern concept. Taking photos in a long shot also aims to convey the room to the audience. At the ideological level, the use of the word *halal*, which means that it is permissible to eat and is not prohibited by *shara'* law (Mulyati et al., 2023), here becomes very ideological, because from what was previously a *halal* word intended to avoid humans from unhealthy or dangerous food, or aiming for goodness, instead it is ridden for the sake of selling.

b. The post of "40 Days until Ramadan"

At the object reality level, this post shows photos of the giant umbrella of the *Prophet's Mosque* and the tall towering buildings typical of the *Prophet's Mosque* in *Medina*. The background in this post is a light blue sky and white clouds. The shooting angle used is also a low angle. The text reads "40 Days until Ramadan." The caption reads "Ramadan starts in 40 days *InshaAllah*. May *Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala* allow us to reach it. Tag your loved ones to remind them."

At the level of representation, this indicates the splendor and height of the building of the *Prophet's Mosque*. The use of the *Prophet's Mosque* and the caption using English also represent that this post is intended for rich Muslims. Because not all Muslims can experience worshiping directly at the *Prophet's Mosque* located in *Medina*. The caption on the post also represents that this post is intended for Muslims because Ramadan worship is only carried out by Muslims.

c. The Post of "Instaperfect Collaboration with Si.Se.Sa"y

At the reality level, slide 1 of this post shows six female models wearing long *Muslim* clothes, microphones, stairs, and a black carpet. The models wear *hijabs* that match the color of the clothes they wear. In the background, a sentence that reads "*Si.Se.Sa* Fashion Show in Collaboration

with Instaperfect." The writing is gold on a bright white background. The shooting point of view is to use a long shot. With a caption that reads, "Sharing the same mission to support all *Muslim* women to be more confident with *halal* glam makeup from Instaperfect and *sharia* glam clothing brings us to this meaningful collaboration. Shop now at @sisesaclothing boutique or official reseller and get exclusive Instaperfect hampers."

At the representation level, the use of gold-colored writing represents the luxury of Instaperfect and *si.se.sa*. The white background also strengthens the impression of gold to make it brighter and more luxurious. The use of white also has a holy connotation. Captions are displayed in English. Writing in English has the connotation of being aimed at certain groups. The caption on the post represents that this post is aimed at rich *Muslim* women with a glamorous or luxurious style. At the ideological level, the use of luxury clothing and the use of a glamorous or luxurious style is ideological in nature. *Islam* teaches savings starting from everyday life, including the clothes worn. Clothing that was previously intended to cover the private parts has now become a fashion event.

Slide 2 in this post, at the realistic level, shows 10 (ten) female models wearing long *Muslim* clothing in the form of overalls (not separate shirts and skirts). The models also wear *hijabs* with colors that match the clothes they wear. On the backdrop in the background are the words "*Si.Se.Sa x Instaperfect*" which is bright white. The point of view of this shooting also uses a medium long shot. At the representation level, the 10 female models wearing *Muslim* clothes represent that the clothes they wear are from the *si.se.sa* brand. Their clothes look elegant, luxurious, and beautiful. The shooting point of view here uses a long shot medium to show their activities. This represents that women who use the Instaperfect and *si.se.sa* brands are elegant, beautiful, and glamorous women.

At an ideological level, Instaperfect wants to show that *sharia* clothing is a very good thing considering that *Islam* teaches that women must dress without showing their curves. However, you should wear are simple *Muslim* clothes, not those that emphasize luxury.

d. The Post of "A Woman Closing Her Eyes"

At the reality level, this post shows a woman wearing a *hijab*, pink *Muslim* clothing, and wearing a chip that covers most of her forehead. The *hijab* she wears appears to cover her chest by *Islamic* law. She is shown closing her eyes and placing both hands on her chest. In the background, the sea is colored yellow and pink due to the reflection of sunlight. Here, there is a caption that says "Wake up with a heart full of gratitude before the sun rises. Have a nice day, my darling! #RemarkableReflection".

At the representational level, the female model who is placing both hands on her chest and looking solemn with her eyes closed represents a pious praying woman. The shooting uses a medium shot technique, which makes the audience immediately focus on the woman. Instaperfect invites the audience to reflect on themselves with gratitude. Captions are displayed in English. Writing in English has the connotation of being aimed at certain groups. In this way, the caption represents a wealthy *Muslim* woman who is always grateful and prays daily. Pink *Muslim* clothing represents that the target audience is women.

At the ideological level, it appears that the audience for this post is *Muslims*. However, the existence of women dressed in *Islamic* clothing who look religious has become ideological. Here, religiosity is driven by capitalism from the Instaperfect brand.

e. The Post of "A Woman Who Recites the Quran"

At the reality level, this post shows a woman dressed in pink *Muslim* clothes, an open *Al-Quran*, a closed *Al-Quran*, a *Koran* reading table and prayer beads, a clean white floor, large windows with a mosaic pattern. The setting for this post is a mosque. The caption for this post is "As Ramadan arrives, we are so blessed to experience it. We believe it's the perfect time for some self-reflection. Who's with us? #RemarkableReflection" (Instaperfect 2023).

At this post's representational level, a mosque with white floors gives a clean and holy connotation. You can also see a large mosaic window in front of the woman. This motif connotes the woman as being in a beautiful and magnificent mosque. Using captions in English has the connotation of being aimed at certain groups. This represents upper-class *Muslim* women who are diligent in praying.

At the ideological level, in this case, the activity of worship which was previously intended to get closer to *Allah* is being ridden by capitalism from the Instaperfect brand. So here there is an ideology that Instaperfect users are women who diligently worship.

f. The Post of "Both Hands Holding Prayer Beads Toward the Sky"

At the reality level, the main objects contained in this post are two hands, prayer beads, and sunlight. In the background, a pink sky is displayed with white clouds. The picture was taken at a low angle. In this way, the photos taken become backlight. Here there is the writing "Be grateful for any progress that you've made today #RemarkableReflection", and the word in Arabic, namely *Alhamdulillah*.

At the representation level, the connotation of the main object above is someone who will worship using *dhikr*. The composition of the main object is also placed in the middle so that the audience's eyes see the object centrally. The presence of writing and captions displayed in English has the connotation of being aimed at highly educated or upper middle class

people. The words grateful and *Alhamdulillah* represent the gratitude that all Muslims must have. The pink sky background represents that the target audience is women and represents the color of the Instaperfect brand. The caption on the post represents upper-class Muslim women who are always grateful.

At the ideological level, the worship activity previously intended to get closer to *Allah* is here driven by the Instaperfect brand. So here there is an ideology that Instaperfect users are pious women.

g. The post of "Quotes from Ustaz Ali Hasan Bawazier"

In this post, at the reality level, the main object is a picture of a white mosque and quotes from *Ustad Ali Hasan Bawazier*. The caption is written,

"Soul full of gratitude and get ready to start the days ahead with remarkable stories, starting from doing small wins every day. What are your best reflection moments during this holy month, dear? Share it with us, below! #RemarkableReflection."

Taking pictures of the mosque using a low angle technique. At the representation level, taking pictures of mosques using low angle techniques represents the mosque as a majestic place. Then there is the writing, "Successful people are people who are patient - *Ustad Ali Hasan Bawazier*" which is in the middle. This makes the audience's eyes immediately focus on the quote. The presence of a mosque connotes that the post is aimed at Muslims. The caption displayed in English means it is aimed at highly educated or upper-middle-class people. This represents a rich Muslim woman who is always patient and diligent in going to the mosque. The mosque is a place of worship for Muslims. The picture of the mosque and the quotes here, which were intended to prevent people from doing bad actions or were intended for good, have instead been used. So, the ideology is built that people who like going to mosques use Instaperfect products.

On Slides 2 and 3, the level of reality in the post "Quotes *Ust. Ali Hasan Bawazier*" has a white mosque, the sentence "When you hope for a big award, you must be ready to face a big test" on slide 2, and "May you have remarkable stories during this *Ramadhan*, containing the series of small wins" on slide 3. Taking pictures of the mosque using low angle technique. At the representation level, taking pictures of mosques using low angle techniques represents that the mosque is a magnificent place, and the writing and captions displayed in English have the connotation of being aimed at highly educated or upper-middle-class people. The use of a mosque in the background also has the connotation of being aimed at Muslims. Because the mosque is a place of worship for Muslims. Quotes about *Ramadhan* also reinforce this. This has the connotation that the post is aimed at Muslims in the context of the month of *Ramadhan*. At the ideological level, here the ideology is formed that Instaperfect users are people who like to worship in mosques during the month of *Ramadhan*.

h. The Post of "Instaperfect Remarkable Reflection"

On slide 1 of the post "Instagram Remarkable Reflection", at the reality level it shows three women, a microphone, luxury gray chairs, a glass table, flower arrangements on the stage, pink chairs, and the audience. All the women in the picture are also seen wearing hijabs or Muslim clothes. The three of them are also shown holding microphones. The post's caption above is "Special event that becomes our small win to achieve our #RemarkableReflection. We are so blessed to reconnect with beautiful souls and share good memories. Have you found your small win today, dear?" At the level of representation, the three women on stage are holding microphones. This represents that an Instaperfect activity entitled "Remarkable Reflection" is taking place here, which means extraordinary reflection and is being attended by a large audience. This also represents that the event is aimed at Muslim women. Captions displayed in English

have the connotation of being aimed at highly educated or upper middle-class people. This represents a rich Muslim woman who always keeps in touch. At the ideological level, there is an ideology here that Instaperfect reflects Muslim women who are extraordinarily glamorous.

On Slides 2 and 3 of the Instaperfect post "Remarkable Reflection", at the reality level there is a sofa, a table, a woman and a man holding microphones, and a flower arrangement. Slide 3 shows the silhouette of a woman wearing pink clothes. The background on slides 2 and 3 is a white layer. The image taken is a medium long shot. The use of framing techniques on slide 3. At the representation level, the event invited *Ustad* and *Ustadzah* who filled the event, and represented that the event was intended for Muslims. The clothes of the audience who attended the event also had a pink theme, which represents the color of the Instaperfect brand. At the ideological level, namely *tausiyah* events that should be held or carried out to gain spiritual enlightenment, instead become ideological. The ideology presented here is that Muslim women who attend *tausiyah* are women who use the Instaperfect brand.

Slides 5 and 6 of the Instaperfect post "Remarkable Reflection," at the reality level it shows women wearing pink Muslim clothing, flower arrangements, a white screen background, room walls, and doors. Pictures for slide 5 taken using the medium shot technique, and for slide 6, they were taken using the medium long shot technique. Here, there is also a woman holding a microphone, a round table, chairs, an audience, a pink box, and MC paper.

At the representation level, these women represent the crew and the event's audience. The presence of spectator chairs supports this and the event looks interactive. The medium shot shooting technique focuses on objects to make them more detailed, and medium long shots are also used so that objects can be seen in detail but still show the surrounding environment. Pink Muslim clothing represents the color of the Instaperfect

brand. At the ideological level, here there is an ideology that the ideal Muslim woman is a Muslim woman who appears at similar events and uses the Instaperfect brand.

On slides 4 and 7 of the Instaperfect post "Remarkable Reflection", at the reality level it shows a woman holding a box containing make-up products from the Instaperfect brand, a woman dressed in pink Muslim clothes, a beautiful public figure dressing up in front of the mirror, a flower arrangement, glass decorations, and white candles. Slides 4 and 7 have shades of pink. The shooting technique is medium shot. At the representation level, a beautiful public figure wearing Muslim clothing is dressing up using Instaperfect products in front of a mirror representing the beauty of using the Instaperfect brand. The box containing make-up from the Instaperfect brand represents a souvenir from the Instaperfect brand for the consumers present. The use of shades of pink represents the color of the Instaperfect brand. The medium shot shooting technique makes the object focused and detailed. At the ideological level, there is an ideology here that Instaperfect reflects upper-class Muslim women who are beautiful and glamorous.

Based on the description above the ideology built in the posts on the Instaperfect account being analyzed is the ideology of capitalism of the Instaperfect brand. Capitalism is contrary to Islamic values, as stated by Huda (2016), that capitalism is considered to legalize and encourage hedonistic culture, something that is inappropriate and reprehensible in everyday life. The materialistic attitude that exists in the capitalist system is considered dangerous for the Islamic faith which emphasizes life after death.

2. Religious Commodification and Semiotic Analysis: Instaperfect's Branding Practices

This analysis employs John Fiske's semiotic framework to unpack how Instaperfect's Instagram posts commodify religion. Fiske's three levels of semiotic analysis—reality, representation, and ideology—reveal the multilayered process through which religious symbols and practices are recontextualized into a capitalist framework. This study explores how visual and textual elements in Instaperfect's posts articulate religiosity as an aspirational consumer identity, positioning Islamic values within the domain of market-driven ideologies.

a. Reality: The Tangible Elements of Branding

The first level of Fiske's semiotics focuses on the tangible elements of media texts, such as objects, people, and settings. In Instaperfect's Instagram posts, reality is encoded through carefully curated visuals, such as luxurious dining settings, elegant *Muslim* attire, and acts of worship. For example, the "Halal Fine Dining Recommendation" post emphasizes high-end restaurants with meticulously arranged tableware and interiors, signaling exclusivity. Similarly, posts depicting *Quran* recitation or prayer beads construct an aura of devotion and spirituality.

These visual elements are not arbitrary; they function as signifiers that establish a connection between religious practices and Instaperfect's brand identity. By showcasing acts of piety, luxurious lifestyles, and carefully designed settings, the posts create a reality that blends faith with affluence, laying the groundwork for deeper symbolic meanings.

b. Representation: Constructing Meaning through Media

The second level, representation, examines how these tangible elements are organized to convey meaning. Instaperfect employs visual

and textual strategies that align Islamic values with sophistication and modernity. For instance, the collaboration with the *Muslim* fashion brand *Si.Se.Sa* features models in glamorous *sharia*-compliant attire. The gold lettering and minimalist backgrounds further emphasize elegance, subtly aligning Islamic modesty with affluence and glamour.

In posts such as “A Woman Closing Her Eyes” or “40 Days until *Ramadan*,” the representation of pious *Muslim* women is intertwined with aspirational lifestyles. Captions in English and the use of pink—a color strongly associated with femininity and the brand itself—convey an image of gratitude, devotion, and exclusivity. Through these representations, Instaperfect redefines Islamic values, constructing a narrative where religiosity is equated with aesthetic appeal and social status.

c. Ideology: Embedding Capitalism within Religious Symbols

At the ideological level, Fiske’s analysis reveals how Instaperfect encodes capitalist values into religious imagery. Posts featuring mosques, prayer beads, and *Quranic* recitation embed sacred elements within a branding narrative that prioritizes consumption. For example, the “*Remarkable Reflection*” event aligns religious devotion with brand engagement, positioning Instaperfect as a facilitator of spiritual and social fulfillment. Similarly, the “*Halal Fine Dining Recommendation*” post transforms “*halal*,” a concept rooted in ethical consumption, into a symbol of luxury and exclusivity. This commodification aligns with broader capitalist ideologies, where religious values are appropriated to create marketable identities. Fiske’s framework highlights how this ideological shift transforms Islamic practices from acts of devotion into symbols of consumer identity, subtly reinforcing materialistic values contrary to the original spiritual principles.

Instaperfect employs a sophisticated interplay of visual and linguistic codes to construct a narrative that aligns religiosity with modern

consumer culture. The use of English captions throughout its posts positions the brand as cosmopolitan, targeting affluent, educated *Muslim* women who aspire to blend traditional values with contemporary lifestyles. Visual elements such as pastel color schemes, luxurious settings, and carefully curated compositions further reinforce this aspirational identity. These codes not only enhance the brand's appeal but also subtly integrate religious practices into a broader framework of elegance and material sophistication. A striking example of this strategy is evident in the post featuring prayer beads, where the imagery of a pink sky and backlighting evokes tranquility and spiritual gratitude. While this visual design highlights religious devotion, it simultaneously associates Instaperfect with these sentiments. By linking spiritual fulfillment with its products, the brand encourages audiences to equate their religious identity with the consumption of Instaperfect goods, merging faith and consumerism in a seamless narrative.

Underlying Instaperfect's branding is a recurring tension between the sacred and the secular. Traditional religious symbols, such as mosques and *Quranic* recitation, are typically associated with humility and devotion. However, in the brand's representations, these symbols take on new connotations of exclusivity and sophistication. For instance, the depiction of the Prophet's Mosque in the "40 Days until Ramadan" post recontextualizes this sacred space as a backdrop for marketing purposes. This transformation illustrates how religious symbols are leveraged to blend spiritual aspirations with material consumption, reflecting a broader ideological shift where religion becomes a cultural asset rather than solely a spiritual practice. This ideological shift is encoded through the media texts Instaperfect produces, reshaping consumer perceptions of religiosity. By presenting sacred symbols as luxurious lifestyle elements, the brand redefines their meanings within a capitalist framework. This process positions faith not as an intrinsic spiritual journey but as a consumable

identity marker, fostering a narrative where devotion aligns with sophistication and material affluence.

Instaperfect's branding also reveals a gendered dimension to the commodification of religion. Women are consistently portrayed in pink *Muslim* attire, reinforcing their dual roles as devout individuals and modern fashion icons. This depiction constructs an idealized image of *Muslim* femininity, where modest fashion and *halal* makeup become essential components of their identity. Campaigns such as "Instaperfect Collaboration with *Si.Se.Sa*" exemplify this narrative, intertwining modesty with glamour to create a seamless blend of faith and fashion. Through such representations, Instaperfect constructs an aspirational identity for *Muslim* women, emphasizing their ability to balance religious devotion with modern elegance. However, this narrative also commodifies gender roles, reducing religiosity to an aesthetic and framing it as a curated lifestyle choice tied to consumer behavior. The brand's portrayal subtly encourages women to see religious expression as something that must be visually pleasing and commercially viable, reinforcing capitalist ideologies.

At the core of Instaperfect's branding strategy is the capitalist reframing of Islamic values. Foundational concepts such as *halal*, modesty, and gratitude are reinterpreted to serve market-driven objectives, transforming them into symbols of social status and lifestyle aspiration. John Fiske's semiotic framework highlights how this reframing distorts the intrinsic meanings of these values, aligning them with materialism and exclusivity. The frequent association of *halal* with luxury goods and fine dining exemplifies this shift. What was once an ethical guideline for consumption is now positioned as a marker of affluence and sophistication. Similarly, acts of worship depicted in the brand's posts are aestheticized, framed as practices that enhance one's personal elegance and spirituality while implicitly endorsing Instaperfect products. This alignment of faith

with consumerism ultimately reduces religious devotion to a visual and material construct, serving the brand's broader capitalist narrative.

Instaperfect reshapes Islamic symbols and values through this intricate semiotic encoding to align with its marketing objectives. By blending sacred elements with aspirational lifestyles, the brand not only commodifies religiosity but also influences how audiences perceive and practice their faith. The tension between tradition and modernity, spirituality and materialism, is carefully navigated to create a compelling and deeply narrative embedded within consumer culture

D. CONCLUSION

The analysis reveals that Instaperfect's branding strategy intricately blends religious symbols with capitalist ideologies, effectively commodifying Islamic values such as halal, modesty, and gratitude. The brand's use of visual and linguistic codes constructs an aspirational identity for Muslim women, aligning faith with material sophistication and elegance. By embedding Islamic practices into a broader narrative of exclusivity and modernity, Instaperfect reshapes traditional religious symbols into consumable markers of social status. However, this commodification risks distorting the intrinsic spiritual essence of these values, substituting devotion with aesthetics and reducing religiosity to a curated consumer lifestyle.

Despite its insightful findings, this study is limited by its focus on a single brand and its reliance on Instagram posts as the primary data source. Future research could extend these findings by examining how religious commodification operates across multiple brands and platforms, exploring its implications in diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts. Additionally, longitudinal studies could investigate how such branding strategies influence consumer perceptions of religiosity over time,

contributing to a deeper understanding of the intersection between religion, media, and consumer culture.

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