

**Celebrity Preachers and The Commodification Of Da'wah:
A Comparative Study Of Traditional Ulama Versus Influencer Hijrah In
Indonesia**

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Abstract: The explosive growth of Islamic preaching content on Indonesian social media since 2015 has produced two strikingly different models of religious authority that share platform space but diverge in nearly every other respect. This article presents a comparative netnographic study of twenty Indonesian da'wah actors: ten traditional ulama grounded in pesantren scholarship and chains of transmission (Typology A) and ten hijrah influencers who built their authority primarily through digital charisma, lifestyle aesthetics, and commercial partnerships (Typology B) observed across YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok over twelve months (July 2024–June 2025). Drawing on 4,200 posts, engagement metrics for 2,400 content units, and semistructured interviews with eight participants, we identify three findings. First, divergent production logics: Typology A produces longform, minimally edited scholarly lectures oriented toward ta'lim (instruction), while Typology B produces shortform, dramatically edited entertainment-oriented content calibrated for algorithmic amplification. Second, a commodification continuum: Typology A maintains relative resistance to commercial partnerships, while Typology B intensively monetizes religious content through brand endorsements, merchandise, and paid events, framing commodification as a form of halal economic sustainability. Third, asymmetric algorithmic legitimacy: platform algorithms consistently reward Typology B with greater reach, yet comment-section dynamics reveal persistent counterlegitimation from audiences who invoke traditional scholarly credentials to challenge influencer authority. We propose the concept of commodified piety to describe a mode of religious performance in which spiritual, economic, and algorithmic value become structurally entangled, and argue that the political economy of platforms not merely individual ambition drives this entanglement.

Keywords: *Commodified piety; celebrity preachers; hijrah influencer; political economy of da'wah; Indonesian Islam.*

Introduction

Two scenes from Indonesian digital Islam, separated by platform but united by paradox. In the first, a seventy-year-old kyai sits cross-legged on the floor of his pesantren in Jombang, East Java, teaching Kitab al-Hikam to thirty santri who have memorized entire volumes of classical Arabic jurisprudence. A young santri records the session on a smartphone propped against a stack of kitab kuning and uploads it to the pesantren's YouTube channel that evening. The video fifty-three minutes of uninterrupted scholarly exposition in a mixture of Arabic, Javanese, and Indonesian, with no editing, no background music, and no thumbnail optimization accumulates 287 views in its first week. In the second scene, a twenty-six-year-old content creator in Jakarta, wearing a tailored thobe and designer watch, records a forty-five-second TikTok explaining "three practices that will make you wealthy beyond measure," set against a trending audio track and punctuated by dramatic zoom cuts. The video reaches 2.3 million views within seventy-two hours. A swipe-up link in his Instagram bio leads to an online store selling branded prayer mats, perfume oils, and motivational books bearing his name. Both individuals claim to speak for Islam. Both are heard but by vastly different audiences, through vastly different mechanisms, and with vastly different material consequences.

These two scenes are not fabricated. They are composites drawn from the netnographic fieldwork that this article reports, and they capture the central phenomenon we seek to analyze: the coexistence and competition of fundamentally different models of Islamic religious authority within the same digital ecosystem. The first model which we designate Typology A is anchored in the pesantren tradition, legitimated by chains of scholarly transmission (*sanad*), and oriented toward the gradual cultivation of religious knowledge (*ta'lim*) among committed students. The second model which we designate Typology B is anchored in platform culture, legitimated by engagement metrics and lifestyle aesthetics, and oriented toward the rapid dissemination of accessible religious content to mass audiences. The two typologies are not merely stylistic variants; they represent divergent epistemologies of authority, divergent economies of production, and divergent relationships with the commercial logic of platform capitalism.

A substantial body of scholarship has examined various dimensions of digital Islamic preaching in Indonesia. Hoesterey (2016) analyzed how the celebrity preacher Aa Gym (Abdullah Gymnastiar) built a media empire that merged Islamic self-help with commercial entrepreneurship.

Slama (2018) documented how social media reshaped Indonesian Islamic practice and piety. Raya (2024, 2025) analyzed the packaging, persuasion, and commodification strategies of contemporary celebrity preachers. Febrian (2024) mapped the visual strategies through which religious influencers construct authority on Instagram. Rohmatullah et al. (2022) documented the rise of traditionalist digital preachers like Gus Baha' and the Santri Gayeng movement.

Baulch and Pramianti (2018) examined how hijabers on Instagram construct an ideal Muslim femininity that is simultaneously pious and commercially aspirational. Yet these studies, valuable as they are, have tended to examine either traditional or digital actors in isolation, without systematic comparison of how the two models differ in their production logics, their relationships with commercial capital, and their responses to algorithmic governance. The absence of such comparison means that the literature treats the digital da'wah landscape as if it were homogeneous, when in fact it is structured by a deep fault line between two fundamentally different visions of what preaching is for.

Our study addresses this gap through a comparative netnographic investigation guided by three research questions: (1) How do traditional ulama and hijrah influencers differ in their strategies of content production for digital platforms? (2) Where do they fall on the continuum from resistance to embrace of the commodification of religious messaging? (3) How does algorithmic visibility interact with traditional scholarly legitimacy to produce divergent and sometimes contradictory forms of authority recognition?

Research Methods

a. Research Design

We adopted a comparative netnographic design (Kozinets, 2015; Kozinets dan Gretzel, 2023), structured as a systematic comparison between two purposively constructed typological groups observed across the same set of digital platforms over the same time period. The comparative structure is essential to our contribution: only by examining both typologies side by side, using the same analytical categories and the same platforms, can we identify the structural differences that produce divergent outcomes in the same algorithmic environment.

b. Case Selection

We selected twenty da'wah actors ten representing Typology A (traditional ulama) and ten representing Typology B (hijrah influencers) using purposive sampling based on the following criteria. For Typology A: formal pesantren education of at least ten years, recognized affiliation with NU, Muhammadiyah, or MUI, active presence on at least one major social media platform, and a minimum of 50,000 followers.

For Typology B: primary authority built through digital platforms rather than pesantren credentials, active on at least two major platforms, minimum 200,000 followers, and visible engagement with commercial partnerships. We assigned each actor a code (A1–A10 for traditional ulama, B1–B10 for hijrah influencers) to enable systematic reference while maintaining analytical clarity. Table 1 presents the coded actors with descriptive characteristics.

Code	Typology	Primary Platform	Followers (largest)	Education	Affiliation	Commercial Partnerships
A1	Traditional	YouTube	4.2M	Pesantren + Al-Azhar	NU	None visible
A2	Traditional	YouTube	2.8M	Pesantren Jombang	NU	Minimal (book sales)
A3	Traditional	YouTube	1.9M	Pesantren Lirboyo	NU	None visible
A4	Traditional	YouTube	1.5M	Pesantren + UIN	Muhammadiyah	None visible

Code	Typology	Primary Platform	Followers (largest)	Education	Affiliation	Commercial Partnerships
A5	Traditional	YouTube	890K	Pesantren Sidogiri	NU	Book sales only
A6	Traditional	Instagram	620K	Pesantren + S3	MUI	Occasional
A7	Traditional	YouTube	540K	Pesantren Tebuireng	NU	None visible
A8	Traditional	YouTube	380K	Pesantren + LIPIA	Independent	Book sales only
A9	Traditional	YouTube	210K	Pesantren NTB	NU	None visible
A10	Traditional	Instagram	95K	Pesantren Lombok	NU	None visible
B1	Influencer	YouTube + IG	6.8M	S1 Non-Islamic	Non-affiliated	Intensive (15+ brands)
B2	Influencer	YouTube + IG	5.1M	S1 Non-Islamic	Non-affiliated	Intensive (20+ brands)
B3	Influencer	TikTok + IG	3.4M	SMA + self-taught	Non-affiliated	High (10+ brands)
B4	Influencer	Instagram	2.9M	S1 + pesantren (short)	Loose NU	Moderate (5–8 brands)
B5	Influencer	TikTok	2.2M	SMA + online courses	Non-affiliated	Intensive (12+ brands)
B6	Influencer	YouTube + IG	1.8M	S1 Communication	Non-affiliated	High (8+ brands)
B7	Influencer	Instagram	1.4M	S1 Design	Non-affiliated	Intensive (15+ brands)

Code	Typology	Primary Platform	Followers (largest)	Education	Affiliation	Commercial Partnerships
						brands)
B8	Influencer	TikTok + IG	980K	SMA + ma'had	Loose Salafi	Moderate (5 brands)
B9	Influencer	Instagram	720K	S1 Psychology	Non-affiliated	High (10+ brands)
B10	Influencer	TikTok	450K	SMA	Non-affiliated	Moderate (6 brands)

Table 1. Characteristics of the twenty da'wah actors analyzed (coded A1–A10 and B1–B10)

c. Data Collection

Data were collected over twelve months (July 2024–June 2025) through four parallel streams. First, systematic netnographic observation: we followed all twenty accounts across their active platforms, conducting structured observation sessions of two to three hours per week per typology, documenting content types, posting patterns, audience interactions, and observable changes in strategy through detailed digital field notes maintained in Notion and synchronized to Zotero as annotated entries. Second, content archiving: we archived a total of 4,200 posts (approximately 210 per actor) using a combination of manual screenshotting with Snagit and structured metadata recording in Excel. Third, engagement metric tracking: for a subset of 2,400 posts (120 per actor, sampled to capture the full range of content types), we recorded likes, comments, shares, saves, and views at two time points 48 hours and 30 days post-upload to capture both algorithmic distribution and longer-term organic reach. Fourth, semi-structured interviews: we conducted interviews with eight participants four from Typology A (A1, A3, A6, A9) and four from Typology B (B2, B4, B6, B9) via Zoom and in-person meetings, lasting 60-90 minutes each. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized.

d. Data Analysis

Analysis proceeded through two parallel tracks. For the qualitative data (field notes, archived content, interview transcripts), we employed thematic analysis in NVivo 14 with a coding framework developed deductively from three theoretical foundations: Mosco's (2009) three forms of commodification (content, audience, labor), Hoesterey's (2016) analysis of celebrity preacher economy, and Alatas's (2021) articulatory labor framework.

The coding tree had three primary branches: production logic (sub-codes: duration, editing intensity, language register, visual strategy, scholarly apparatus), commodification practices (sub-codes: product endorsement, merchandise, paid events, platform monetization, sponsored content), and legitimacy negotiation (sub-codes: credential display, community endorsement, algorithmic amplification, counter-legitimation challenges). Inter-coder reliability was assessed with a trained research assistant on a 15% subset, yielding Cohen's $\kappa = 0.81$. For the quantitative metric data, we calculated descriptive statistics (means, medians, standard deviations) and conducted independent-samples t-tests to assess whether differences in engagement metrics between Typology A and Typology B were statistically significant, using a significance threshold of $p < .05$.

Results and Discussion

Divergent Production Logics

The most immediately visible difference between the two typologies lay in their production logics the material practices through which religious content is created, formatted, and presented for platform consumption. These differences were not merely stylistic; they reflected fundamentally different orientations toward what da'wah is and what it is for.

Typology A actors produced content that was, in most cases, a documentation of pre-existing religious teaching rather than content created specifically for the platform. The typical Typology A post was a recording of a pengajian (religious study session) or ceramah (sermon) that had taken place in a mosque, pesantren, or community hall, captured by a single camera or smartphone with minimal editing. Median duration was 34 minutes for YouTube content and 8 minutes for Instagram/TikTok clips (which were

typically excerpts from longer recordings). Language was formal, mixing Arabic terminology with Indonesian and often with regional languages (Javanese, Sundanese, or Sasak for NTB-based actors).

Visual presentation was austere: the scholar typically sat or stood in front of a whiteboard, bookshelf, or mosque interior, wearing traditional religious attire (sarong, kopiah, jubbah). Background music was absent in 94% of Typology A content. When asked about production practices, Participant A3 offered a revealing characterization: "I do not make content. I teach. Someone records my teaching. That is all. The camera is not my concern; the knowledge is my concern."

Typology B actors, by contrast, produced content that was platform-native from conception through execution. The typical Typology B post was created specifically for digital consumption, with the platform's requirements duration, format, algorithm preferences shaping every production decision. Median duration was 52 seconds for TikTok/Reels, 4.5 minutes for Instagram carousels and IGTV, and 12 minutes for YouTube. Language was informal, conversational, and heavily peppered with slang, English loanwords, and internet-native expressions. Visual presentation was highly curated: professional lighting, multiple camera angles, dramatic zoom cuts (averaging 1.8 per second for TikTok content), color-graded imagery, and carefully designed thumbnails featuring close-up facial expressions calibrated to trigger curiosity. Background music was present in 87% of Typology B content, often using trending audio. Participant B2 described a production process that bore no resemblance to Typology A's documentation model: "Every video starts with a brainstorm about what is trending. Then we choose a topic that fits the trend. Then we script it opening hook, three key points, closing call to action. Then we shoot three to five takes. Then we edit for two hours. Then we A/B test two thumbnails. Then we schedule it for the optimal posting time. It is a business."

The quantitative data confirmed these qualitative observations. The median engagement rate (total interactions divided by follower count) for Typology A content was 1.4%, compared to 5.7% for Typology B a statistically significant difference ($t = 8.34$, $p < .001$). However, when we controlled for content duration by calculating engagement per minute, the gap narrowed considerably: Typology A content generated

0.12% engagement per minute, while Typology B generated 0.31% per minute, suggesting that the engagement disparity is partly though not entirely a function of format rather than content quality.

The Commodification Continuum

Our second finding concerns the degree to which religious messaging has been integrated with commercial logics. Rather than a binary distinction between commodified and non-commodified da'wah, we found a continuum along which actors are distributed, with Typology A clustered at the low-commodification end and Typology B clustered at the high-commodification end, but with interesting variation within each typology.

Among Typology A actors, commercial partnerships were rare and, when present, limited to book sales and modest donations solicited during livestreams. None of the ten Typology A actors in our sample displayed visible brand endorsements in their content during the observation period. None sold branded merchandise (beyond published books).

None hosted paid ticketed events marketed through their social media. Platform monetization was limited: only three of ten had enabled YouTube's Partner Program, and even those who had did not actively promote their monetization. Participant A1, whose YouTube channel has over four million subscribers, explained his resistance to monetization with theological clarity: "When I teach, I am performing a duty that was entrusted to me by my teachers, who received it from their teachers, going back to the Prophet, peace be upon him. If I turn that duty into a product to be sold, I betray the trust. I do not judge others who do it differently, but for me, knowledge is a trust (amanah), not a commodity."

Among Typology B actors, commercial integration was pervasive and systematic. All ten Typology B actors displayed visible brand endorsements during the observation period, with a median of nine commercial partnerships per actor. The products endorsed ranged from Islamic fashion (hijab lines, designer thobes, perfume oils) through Islamic financial products (sharia-compliant investment apps, digital gold platforms) to lifestyle products with Islamic branding (halal skincare, organic supplements labeled with Arabic calligraphy). Several Typology B actors had launched

their own product lines: branded prayer mats, motivational books, calligraphy prints, and clothing collections. Five of ten hosted paid events typically described as "kajian eksklusif" (exclusive study sessions) or "retreat spiritual" (spiritual retreats) with ticket prices ranging from IDR 150,000 to IDR 2,500,000 (approximately USD 10 to USD 160).

What was particularly revealing was how Typology B actors discursively framed their commercial activities. Rather than acknowledging a tension between da'wah and commerce, they consistently naturalized commodification through three rhetorical strategies.

The first was what we call the sustainability frame: "Content production costs money cameras, editors, studio space. If I do not monetize, I cannot sustain my da'wah" (Participant B6). The second was the amplification frame: "Endorsing a halal product is itself da'wah. I am teaching people that there are halal alternatives. The brand pays me, and the message spreads further" (Participant B4). The third was the meritocratic frame: "If people are willing to pay for my retreat, it means they value my teaching. That is the market validating my authority" (Participant B9). These framing strategies perform a significant discursive labor: they dissolve the boundary between religious mission and commercial enterprise, presenting commodification not as a compromise with worldly logic but as a natural expression of effective da'wah.

Asymmetric Algorithmic Legitimacy

Our third finding concerns the relationship between algorithmic visibility and traditional scholarly legitimacy two forms of recognition that our data reveal to be frequently misaligned, producing a condition we call asymmetric algorithmic legitimacy. The term captures a structural irony: the actors whom platform algorithms reward with the greatest visibility are often the actors whom traditional scholarly communities regard with the greatest skepticism, and vice versa.

The quantitative evidence for this asymmetry is clear. Typology B actors achieved a median monthly reach of 12.4 million impressions, compared to 890,000 for Typology A actors a factor of approximately fourteen. This gap held across all three platforms, though it was most pronounced on TikTok (where Typology B outperformed Typology A by a factor of twenty-three) and least pronounced on YouTube (factor of

eight). The algorithmic explanation is straightforward: Typology B content shorter, more emotionally engaging, more visually dynamic, more likely to trigger shares and comments generates the behavioral signals that platform algorithms interpret as indicators of high-quality content, whereas Typology A content longer, more scholarly, less emotionally charged generates signals that algorithms interpret as indicators of low audience interest.

Yet the comment-section dynamics told a more complex story. In our analysis of 6,800 comments across both typologies, we identified a recurring pattern of what we call counter-legitimation discourse comments that challenged a creator's authority by invoking the credentials of the other typology. Under Typology B content, counter-legitimation comments appeared in approximately 31% of posts, with typical formulations including: "This is nice, but have you studied with a kyai? What is your sanad?" or "Easy to talk about Islam when your real job is selling skincare."

Under Typology A content, counter-legitimation was rarer (appearing in approximately 8% of posts) and took a different form: "Kyai, your knowledge is deep but nobody can watch for 45 minutes. Please make shorter videos so more people benefit." The asymmetry in counter-legitimation frequency itself is telling: it suggests that algorithmic success without traditional credentials provokes more legitimacy challenges than traditional credentials without algorithmic success.

Perhaps the most fascinating dynamic we observed was what we call legitimacy borrowing the practice by which actors from one typology strategically incorporated elements of the other to shore up their weakest legitimacy dimension.

Five of ten Typology B actors, during our observation period, invited a traditional ulama as a guest in at least one video or livestream, framing the collaboration as "seeking knowledge from the experts" while simultaneously benefiting from the association with scholarly credibility. Three of ten Typology A actors, meanwhile, began experimenting with shorter-format content producing two-to-five-minute excerpts of their longer lectures, adding simple graphics and subtitles, and posting at times optimized for algorithmic reach. Participant A6 described this adaptation with ambivalence: "My students told me that nobody watches the full lecture on YouTube. So we started cutting it into short pieces. I do not like it you cannot teach fiqh in three

minutes. But if three minutes brings someone to watch the full lecture, perhaps it is worth it. I think of it as the cover of a book. The cover is not the book, but without a cover, nobody opens the book.

Discussion

Commodified Piety: A Conceptual Framework

Our findings point toward a concept that we believe captures the distinctive character of religious authority production within the political economy of digital platforms. We propose the term commodified piety to describe a mode of religious performance in which spiritual value, economic value, and algorithmic value become structurally entangled not through individual corruption but through the systemic pressures of platform capitalism. Commodified piety is not merely the monetization of religious content (which could be a pragmatic accommodation); it is the structural condition in which the form of religious expression itself its duration, its emotional register, its visual grammar, its timing is shaped by the requirements of commercial platforms whose revenue model depends on maximizing user engagement.

The concept draws on Vincent Mosco's (2009) political economy of communication, which identifies three processes through which capitalism penetrates cultural production: the commodification of content (transforming messages into products), the commodification of audiences (transforming viewers into commodities sold to advertisers), and the commodification of labor (transforming creative work into a source of surplus value).

All three processes are visible in our data. Typology B actors commodify content when they package a Quranic interpretation as a sponsored Instagram carousel. They commodify audiences when their follower counts become the basis for negotiating endorsement fees.

And they commodify their own labor when they subject their creative process to the optimization demands of platform algorithms. What makes commodified piety distinctive is that the commodity in question is not an ordinary cultural product but a claim to speak for the sacred and the labor being commodified is not ordinary creative labor but the articulatory labor of connecting prophetic tradition with contemporary life (Al-atas, 2021).

It is essential to emphasize and this is where our analysis departs from moralizing critiques of "commercialized religion" that commodified piety is not simply a choice made by greedy individuals. It is a structural condition imposed by the political economy of platforms. YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are not public utilities designed to facilitate religious education; they are commercial enterprises designed to generate advertising revenue by maximizing user attention. Every religious creator who enters these platforms enters a system that evaluates their content by commercial metrics, regardless of their personal intentions. The traditional ulama who resists commodification pays a price reduced visibility, smaller audience, slower growth that is imposed not by the market for ideas but by the architecture of the platform itself. In this sense, the platform companies not the individual creators are the primary agents of commodification, and any serious analysis of commodified piety must locate the problem in the system rather than in the souls of the participants.

Comparison with Televangelism and Global Patterns

The phenomenon we document resonates with, but is not identical to, the well-studied case of American televangelism (Hoover, 1988; Bruce, 1990). Like televangelists, Indonesian hijrah influencers merge religious messaging with commercial enterprise, cultivate parasocial relationships with mass audiences, and construct authority through media charisma rather than institutional credentialing.

However, the Indonesian case differs in three important respects. *First*, Indonesian influencer hijrah operates within a platform economy rather than a broadcast economy, which means that the commercial logic is mediated by algorithms rather than by advertising buyers, producing different incentive structures.

Second, the Islamic tradition's emphasis on scholarly credentialing (sanad, ijazah) creates a legitimacy tension that has no precise equivalent in the more congregational Protestant tradition from which most televangelists emerge. *Third*, the Indonesian state's relationship with religious authority through institutions like MUI, NU, and Muhammadiyah introduces a regulatory dimension that complicates the purely market-driven dynamics of American televangelism.

Implications for Institutions and Future Research

Our findings carry two sets of implications. For religious institutions, they suggest that the response to commodified piety cannot be limited to moral exhortation against "commercializing religion." The structural conditions that produce commodified piety the platform economy, the algorithmic privileging of short emotional content, the advertising-based revenue model will not disappear because institutions disapprove of them.

More productive responses might include: developing alternative funding models for digital da'wah (community crowdfunding, institutional grants, waqf-based media production) that reduce creators' dependence on commercial partnerships; investing in platform-native content production capacity within institutions themselves, so that scholarly content can compete aesthetically with influencer content without compromising substance; and engaging in advocacy coalitions that push platform companies to consider the religious and cultural consequences of their algorithmic design choices.

For future research, our comparative framework opens several avenues. Longitudinal studies tracking individual actors' movement along the commodification continuum are traditional ulama becoming more commodified over time? Are some influencers moving toward greater scholarly depth? would add temporal depth to our snapshot analysis. Cross-national comparison with similar dynamics in Turkey, Egypt, and Malaysia would test the generalizability of our typological framework. And audience-side research examining how ordinary Indonesian Muslims evaluate, trust, and act upon content from the two typologies is urgently needed to complement our creator-side analysis.

Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, our sample focuses on highly prominent actors and may not capture dynamics among mid-range or micro-influencer accounts, which constitute the numerical majority of the digital da'wah landscape. Second, we lack access to internal platform data (algorithmic parameters, revenue figures, advertiser contracts), which means our claims about algorithmic mechanisms are inferred from observable effects rather than directly verified. Third, our interview

sample (eight of twenty actors) is incomplete; the actors who declined interviews may hold views that would complicate our findings.

Fourth, the commodification continuum we describe is based on visible, publicly observable practices; private revenue streams (speaking fees, consulting, investment income) that are not displayed on social media are not captured. Fifth, our twelve-month observation period, while substantial, captures a specific moment in a rapidly evolving landscape; algorithmic changes or regulatory developments after our data collection may have altered some of the dynamics we document.

Conclusion

The commodification of da'wah in Indonesia is not a simple story of corruption, in which pure religion is contaminated by dirty money. It is a structural story, in which a tradition that has always been embedded in material conditions mosques must be built, scholars must eat, books must be published encounters a new material infrastructure whose commercial logic is more pervasive, more intimate, and more consequential than anything that preceded it. The hijrah influencer who endorses halal skincare between Quranic reflections is not necessarily less sincere than the kyai who teaches for free in his pesantren; but the influencer operates within a system that makes sincerity itself a variable to be optimized, a metric to be performed, a commodity to be traded.

The concept of commodified piety that we have developed in this article is intended to illuminate this structural condition without reducing it to moral judgment. Both typologies the traditional ulama who resists the platform's logic and pays the price of invisibility, and the influencer who embraces it and pays the price of legitimacy challenges are navigating the same system from different positions, with different resources and different constraints. Neither is entirely free, and neither is entirely captive. The da'wah landscape of digital Indonesia is, in this sense, a microcosm of a larger question that every religious tradition must eventually face in the age of platform capitalism: can the sacred survive its commodification, and if so, at what cost?.

We close not with an answer but with a question that emerged from our research and that we believe deserves sustained collective reflection. Indonesian Muslims the world's largest national Muslim community now receive a substantial and growing

proportion of their religious guidance through commercially mediated, algorithmically curated, platform-dependent channels. Is this the da'wah they deserve? And if not, what would a da'wah ecosystem look like that serves the community's spiritual needs without subordinating those needs to the profit imperatives of Silicon Valley? These are not questions for scholars alone. They are questions for communities, institutions, and not least for the platforms themselves.

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