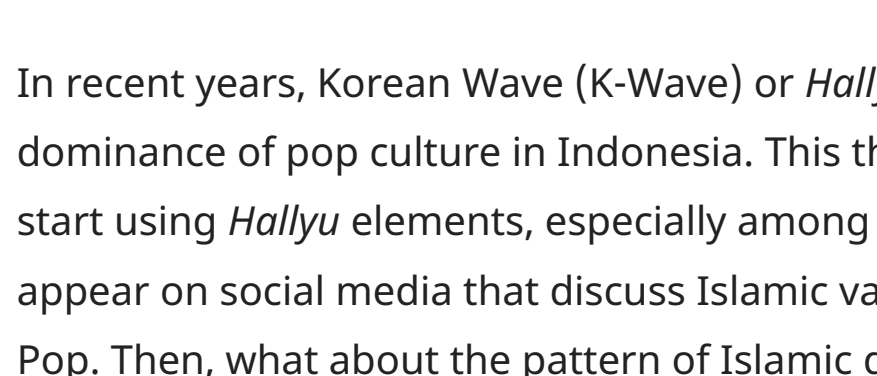


# Korean Wave, Islamic Da'wah and "Hallyucination"

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Since 2015, I have been conducting research on da'wah [1] using the medium of Japanese pop culture (J-Pop) in Indonesia. During my research, I discovered a new da'wah style that is carried out through (hijab [2]) cosplay and (Islamic) manga [3] (see more: Rastati, 2015; Rastati, 2016). For instance, cosplay was originally a costume play, undertaken localization as a form of negotiation between Muslim identity and efforts to embed cosplay as a hobby. In its development, cosplay da'wah is not only dominated by women through hijab cosplay. Men also participated as shown by the case of Akatsuki Afkar (see Rastati, 2019) and Ustadz Marzuki Imron or Ustadz Naruto. [4] These group of men confidently conduct da'wah in mosques and Islamic religious events while wearing costumes. In this context, cosplay is used as a medium to re-attract young people's in practicing Islamic values. Interestingly, this cosplay da'wah has relatively succeeded in combining Islamic values and J-Pop without any significant friction.

In recent years, Korean Wave (K-Wave) or Hallyu has managed to outperform J-Pop in the dominance of pop culture in Indonesia. This then has implications for the pattern of da'wah to start using Hallyu elements, especially among young people. For example, Instagram accounts appear on social media that discuss Islamic values and Hallyu content such as in K-Drama and K-Pop. Then, what about the pattern of Islamic da'wah using the medium of Hallyu?

## K-Wave and Da'wah Against Hallyucination

In mid-August 2018, an Instagram account named @xkwavers or X-Traordinary Korean Wavers was created by a young Islamic preacher named Fuadh Naim. The @xkwavers account uploads a lot of da'wah posts related to Hallyu. The messages that appear on the @xkwavers are based on the call to move from fanaticism towards Korean pop culture and embrace Islamic values (Rosmalina and Zulfikar, 2019).

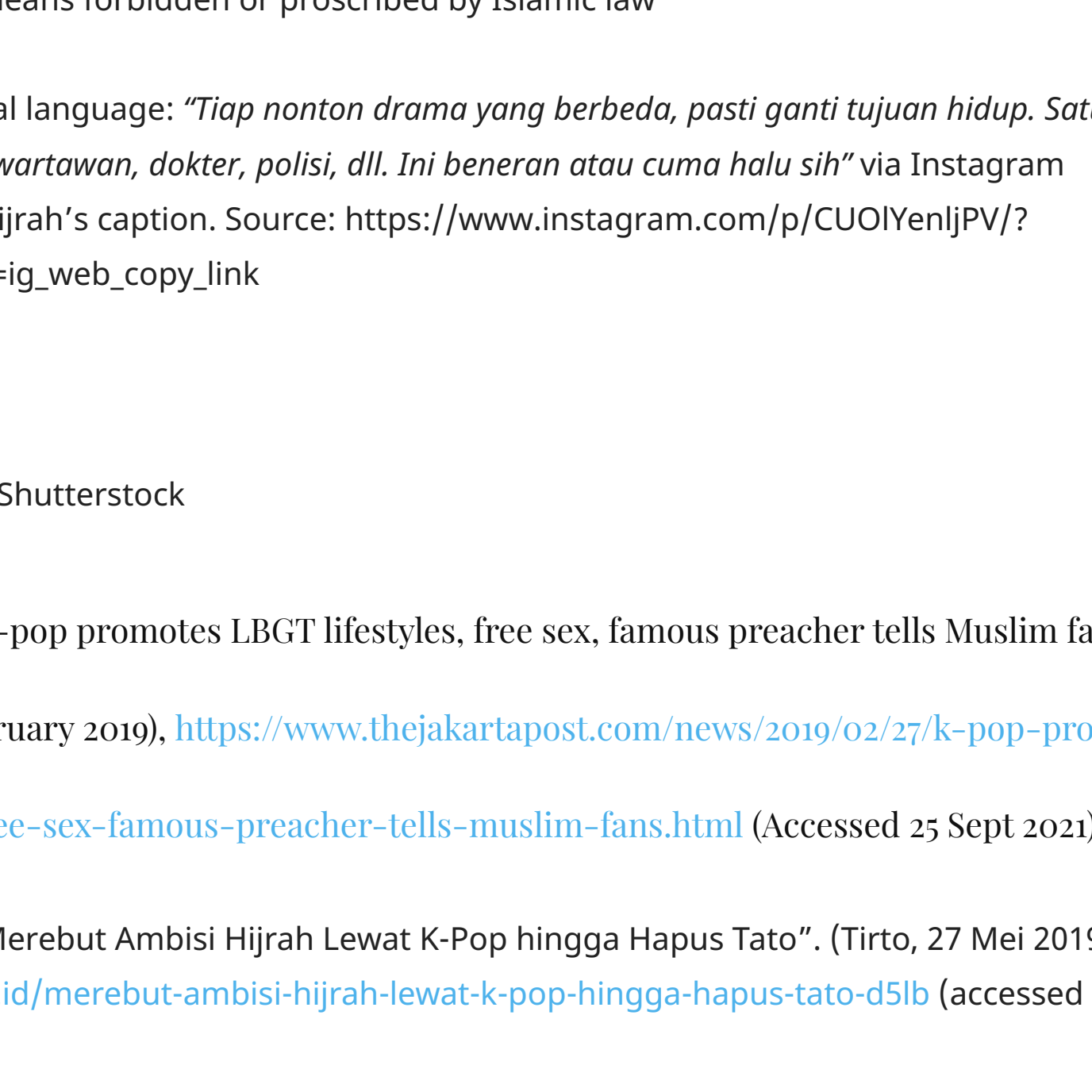
Fuadh himself was previously a K-Pop fan since 2006. When working on his bachelor thesis in university, Fuadh frequently came to communal Islamic teaching. From that, Fuadh realized that Islam and Hallyu were on their own paths and could not coexist (Nurwahidah, 2020). After being immersed in Hallyu for a long time, at one point, Fuadh faced two choices, whether to choose his K-Pop or Islamic norm as his identity (Umma, nd). He then decided to hijrah [5] and break away from his identity as a fanboy (male K-Pop fans).

In 2017, Fuadh joined the Yuk Ngaji community which consisted of da'wah influencers such as Felix Siawu, Cahyo Ahmad Irsyad, and Husain Assadi. The presence of Fuadh as a young preacher gives its own color in the world of contemporary Islamic da'wah through content and da'wah methods that are favored by young people, especially young Muslims who also Hallyu fans. "Before, K-Pop was everything for me. But, after hijrah, I want to use the popularity of K-Pop as a means of da'wah for K-Pop lovers in Indonesia." [6] (Aurelia, Tirta, 27 May 2019).

In the safari da'wah program named "Ada Apa dengan Korea" or AADK (What's Up with Korea) - which took place in 40 cities in 2018-2019- Fuadh preached the harm of K-Pop that he argued often promotes a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) and free sex lifestyle (Arbi, Jakarta Post, 27 February 2019). Besides that, he argued further that there are at least five reasons why Hallyu and Islam are in opposite side, which are promulgate of haram [7] goods, promiscuity, focus on worldly pursuits, and deviation of faith (Naim, 2018). These are among social practices that Fuadh considered to be against the tenets of Islam. AADK received a positive response and some of its attendants, just like Fuadh, decided to leave Hallyu (Nurwahidah, 2020).

Besides AADK, Fuadh also formed a forum named as X-School in 2021. On the xkwavers.id webpage, X-School is described as a meeting room for all Muslim Hallyu fans in Indonesia who aspire to learn more about Islam (xkwavers, nd). X-School students, or so-called trainees, will attend online meetings with a certain curriculum and duration with the aim of making Islam a solution of life.

Aside from @xkwavers account, several similar accounts such as @Kpopers.hijrah and @Hijrahkpop.id also emerges as accounts whose content focuses on the persuasion to hijrah from Hallyu. If @xkwavers looks more subtle in its da'wah content, the @Kpopers.hijrah account tends to be bolder and straightforward in its digital da'wah. For instance, in a post on September 25, 2021, @Kpopers.hijrah highlighted the phenomenon of K-Drama fans who are considered to change their life goals based on the K-Drama they watch. "Every time you watch a different drama, you change the purpose of life. One day, you want to be a journalist, doctor, policeman, etc. Is this for real or is it just hallucination." [8]



Picture. Instagram Content of @Kpopers.hijrah (Source: Instagram, @Kpopers.hijrah)

It refers to the common theme among these da'wah accounts. They consider K-Drama fans (also K-Pop fans) as prominent and experiencing hallucinations from what they witnessed (Nurwahidah, 2020). This, gave rise a terminology called "Hallyucination". Hallyucination is an amalgamation of two words: Hallyu and hallucination. Hallyucination is considered as excessive love for K-Pop idols or scenes in K-Dramas that it affects emotional conditions ranging from sadness, anger, to hallucinations.

In his book, Pernah Tenggelam or Once Drowned (Naim, 2018), Fuadh argues that excessive hallucinations as if he/she will drown faith. Fuadh analogizes someone who experiences hallyucination as if he/she is drowning in the waves of the sea. For Hallyu fans who want to hijrah, this book has become an important reference that helps them to have total detoxification from the glittering Hallyu wave.

## Islamic J-Pop versus Islamic Hallyu

There are at least two reasons why the pattern of using Islamic J-Pop is more acceptable in Islamic da'wah than Hallyu. First, Japanese pop culture has existed in Indonesia since the 80s. Thus, Indonesians are more familiar with and accept Japanese pop culture products. Second, Islam in the New Order era was under pressure so that the process of da'wah movement was more cultural, not political (Syamsuddin and Fatkhan, 2010). This makes the process of proselytizing Islam and J-Pop does not experience consequential friction.

On the other hand, Hallyu entered Indonesia in the 2000s and only experienced massive acceptance from the public about a decade ago. Thus, although Hallyu is hugely popular nowadays, some people find it unfamiliar. Furthermore, Islam in Reformation era obtained a large space of freedom. Various Islamic groups have emerged, ranging from liberals to radicals. However, in several years, religious conservatism is starting to increase (Bruinessen, 2013).

According to Azyumardi Azra, religious conservatism rejects the understanding, renewal of thoughts, and religious practices based on modern developments. For instance, rejection on family planning and vaccination. In the context of pop culture, Islam and Hallyu are considered contradictory.

Therefore, the difference in acceptance between J-Pop and Hallyu is due to changes in Islam, which has become more conservative before, especially among the younger generation. Young Muslims then are faced with the choice of whether to become devout Muslims or to be regarded as "infidels" because of their love for Hallyu. On the other hand, the images of K-Pop idol and scenes in K-Drama that containing LGBT, seductive action, and sinful act are also perceived to be far from Islamic teaching. For Fuadh and many other people, Hallyu then is believed to be an inadequate entertainment for Muslim and should be shunned away. It is not surprising then, if for some groups, Hallyu is considered as a "modern idolatry" that can drown a person and distance themselves from Islamic values (Editor Ibnu Nadzir).

[1] Da'wah means the act of inviting or calling people to embrace Islam  
[2] Hijab means a head covering worn in public by some Muslim women  
[3] Manga means Japanese style comic  
[4] Akatsuki Afkar is a group of male cosplayers from Lumajang affiliated with the Nahdlatul Ulama Multipurpose Ansor Front (Banser NU). Both Akatsuki Afkar and Ustadz Naruto cosplayed a Japanese animation titled Naruto  
[5] Hijrah means the change or movement into a better version of oneself (Noormega, Medium, 2019)  
[6] In original version: "Tadinya bagi saya K-Pop adalah segalanya. Tapi, setelah hijrah, saya ingin memanfaatkan popularitas K-Pop sebagai sarana dakwah untuk para pencinta K-Pop di Indonesia."  
[7] Haram means forbidden or proscribed by Islamic law  
[8] In original language: "Tiap nonton drama yang berbeda, pasti ganti tujuan hidup. Satu waktu pengen jadi wartawan, dokter, polisi, dll. Ini beneran atau cuma halu sih" via Instagram @Kpopers.hijrah's caption. Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/UCU0YeniJPW/?utm\_source=ig\_web\_copy\_link

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\* Opinions in this article are the sole responsibility of the author and are not the responsibility of the PMB BRIN website redaction

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