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An Analysis of Religious Authority in the Age of “Algorithmic Muftis”: Implications and Solutions

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Abstracts

Abstract

The emergence of “Generative AI” and large language models has presented the religiosity ecosystem with an unprecedented challenge; a challenge that is referred to as the transition from “human authority” to “algorithmic muftis.” This research examines the consequences of this replacement using a descriptive-analytical method and an interdisciplinary approach (jurisprudence, sociology, and philosophy of technology). The research findings show that from an epistemological and jurisprudential perspective, the machine output lacks religious authority due to the lack of “intention to compose,” “serious will,” and “queen of inference,” and is only the production of words based on statistical probabilities. At the sociological level, this phenomenon, by changing the nature of authority from “charismatic/traditional” to “cold algorithmic authority,” eliminates institutional intermediaries and weakens the structure of the field. Also, its moral and psychological consequences include the “extreme personalization of religion”, the commodification of fatwas and the creation of a “responsibility gap” that leaves the user morally disconnected. Finally, the article considers the solution to be the transition from the “replacement” paradigm to “augmented ijtihad” and the development of an ethical charter for Islamic artificial intelligence; where the machine is not in the position of a mufti, but rather as an intelligent assistant serving to refine the jurist’s context and subject matter.

Keywords

Generative artificial intelligence, algorithmic mufti, future studies of authority, algorithmic authority, philosophy of jurisprudence, augmented ijtihad.

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