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# Media Spatialization in Indonesia's Digital Political Economy: A Case Study of Platform X through Vincent Mosco's Framework

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**Abstract:** This study examines the dynamics of media spatialization in Indonesia's digital political economy by analyzing selected Twitter (now X) accounts using Vincent Mosco's theoretical framework. It explores how symbolic and algorithmic spatialization practices are employed by various digital actors, including political propagandists (@PartaiSocmed), grassroots storytellers (@txtdrberseragam), and mainstream media outlets (@detikcom and @kompascom) to shape public discourse and assert communicative power. Through a combination of critical analysis and qualitative methods, this research identifies key factors such as emotional engagement, narrative strategies, and algorithmic amplification that reinforce belief systems within digital platforms. The findings suggest that Twitter/X operates not only as a communication tool but also as a contested arena where power is negotiated and redistributed through visibility algorithms, emotional resonance, and content commodification. This study contributes to the broader field of digital political economy by offering a hybrid analytical approach that integrates Mosco's spatialization theory with contemporary notions of algorithmic governance. It highlights how both institutional and non-institutional actors reshape symbolic power in Indonesia's evolving digital public sphere.

**Keywords:** Media Spatialization; Digital Political Economy; Vincent Mosco; Twitter/X.

## 1. Introduction

In today's digital era, it is recognized that social media has become one of the dominant tools in shaping public opinion and disseminating information. Twitter, one of the most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia, plays an important role in developing a discursive space full of political, economic, and cultural interactions. [1], [2]. This transformation not only affects the dynamics of communication but also reforms the power structure in the media system. Social media has become one of the dominant tools for shaping public opinion and disseminating information. Twitter, one of the most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia, plays a significant role in developing a discursive space rich with political, economic, and cultural interactions [1], [2]. This transformation not only affects communication dynamics but also reshapes the power structures within the media system.

This phenomenon can be explained through the lens of the digital political economy, where media is seen not merely as a tool of communication but as an economic and ideological institution laden with interests [3], [4]. In this context, Vincent Mosco's theory of media spatialization becomes crucial in explaining how digital spaces are constructed and controlled by the interests of digital capitalism.

Spatialization, as explained by Mosco, refers to the process through which media expand and organize symbolic space for commercial and political purposes. In social media like Twitter, this is realized through algorithms, audience segmentation, and interface design that allow content dissemination to be controlled by the platform [5], [6]

In Indonesia, spatialization practices through social media have become increasingly significant in the political and social landscape. Studies have shown that political actors utilize Twitter to construct segmented narratives, create opinion polarization, and expand their influence through specialized digital networks [7], [8].

As a platform heavily reliant on algorithmic interaction and data monetization, Twitter not only shapes the space for discourse but also constructs digital spatial boundaries based on economic interests and political affiliations [9], [10]. This highlights the operation of media spatialization logic in ideologically and economically organizing digital space.

This study aims to analyze how the process of media spatialization occurs on Twitter in Indonesia, utilizing Vincent Mosco's political economy of communication theory as the analytical framework. By examining several influential Twitter accounts in public discourse, the study seeks to uncover patterns of control, commodification, and information distribution within the contemporary digital media space.

The object of this research is the platform Twitter, particularly popular and influential Indonesian accounts such as @PartaiSocmed, @txtdrberseragam, @detikcom, and @kompascom. These accounts represent a spectrum of political, cultural, and media-oriented communications that serve as a fertile ground for observing media spatialization practices in the Indonesian digital landscape.

Previous research has employed various methodologies to study media spatialization and political economy, including content analysis, network analysis, and ethnographic approaches. While content analysis is useful for identifying thematic patterns, it often lacks depth in interpreting ideological implications. Network analysis excels in mapping connections but may overlook the discursive strategies deployed within networks. Ethnographic methods offer nuanced insights into user behavior, yet are limited in scope and scalability.

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which allows for a deeper interpretation of texts and interactions to reveal underlying power structures, ideological frameworks, and spatial dynamics. CDA is selected for its strength in uncovering how language and media technologies shape symbolic space within capitalist contexts.

The central research questions addressed in this study are: (1) How does Twitter spatialize discourse in Indonesia's digital political economy? (2) What are the mechanisms through which certain actors gain visibility and control over discourse? (3) How do algorithms and media ownership shape ideological alignment in content dissemination?

To answer these questions, this study proposes a hybrid analytical framework that combines Vincent Mosco's concept of spatialization with the theory of algorithmic governance. This integrated approach is intended to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how power operates within social media platforms like Twitter. By combining these two perspectives, the framework helps analyze not only how digital space is organized and controlled for political and economic purposes but also how algorithms influence the visibility and flow of information. This approach is expected to enhance traditional political economy analysis by incorporating insights into how digital infrastructures such as recommendation systems, data analytics, and platform governance shape communication patterns and public discourse.

## 2. Literature Review

This section provides a more in-depth explanation of theoretical and empirical studies related to media spatialization, digital political economy, Vincent Mosco's contribution, and Twitter as a digital communication platform. The aim is to provide a presentation of the current state of affairs and identify the main gaps discussed in this study.

### 2.1. Media Spatialization and Vincent Mosco's Framework

The concept of spatialization, according to Vincent Mosco, which is one of the core political economy of communication, refers to how the media industry expands the reach of its control over space and time through technological and institutional means [1]. Recent graduate scholars have expanded this framework by exploring how digital infrastructure, such as platforms and algorithms, contributes to spatialization in online environments [2], [3]. These studies show that spatialization is no longer just about geographical expansion, but also

includes symbolic control over digital attention, data flows, and content visibility. The concept os spatialization, which is central to Vincent Mosco's political economy of communication, refers to how media industries extend their control over space and time through technological and institutional means [1]. Recent scholars have expanded this framework by exploring how digital infrastructures, such as platforms and algorithms, contribute to spatialization in online environments [2], [3]. These studies show that spatialization is no longer just about geographical extension, but also includes symbolic control over digital attention, data flows, and content visibility.

## 2.2. Digital Political Economy and Algorithmic Governance

The digital political economy approach emphasizes how economic power is embedded in media systems, particularly on platforms like Twitter, through the commodification of user data and algorithmic filtering [5], [6]. This approach is further developed by studies of algorithmic governance, which argue that algorithms act as new instruments of control and surveillance in public discourse. These mechanisms are important in understanding how Twitter's interface influences public communication and shapes ideological patterns. Public communication shapes ideological patterns [9].

## 2.3. Twitter as a Platform for Political Discourse

Research has shown that Twitter functions as both a participatory and commercial media platform. On one hand, it enables users to engage in political discussions; on the other hand, it embeds an economic logic that prioritizes virality, sensationalism, and advertiser-friendly content [10], [11], [12]. In the Indonesian context, Twitter is widely used by political actors, journalists, and influencers to disseminate messages and mobilize support [13], [14]. These practices reflect spatialization through digital segmentation, visibility control, and narrative alignment.

## 2.4. Studies on X and Media Spatialization

Several recent studies have examined how X (formerly Twitter) contributes to spatialized communication in political environments. For example, network analyses of interactions on X during elections reveal the emergence of echo chambers and ideological clusters that reflect offline political alignments [15], [16]. Other studies have investigated how bots, algorithms, and trending mechanisms manipulate visibility and promote dominant political narratives [17], [18]. However, there remains a lack of research that integrates spatialization theory with empirical analysis of X in the Southeast Asian context.

## 2.5. Related Work on Indonesian Social Media Practices

Indonesia's digital culture has attracted growing academic interest. Research has explored themes such as political polarization, disinformation, and the role of influencers in shaping public discourse [19], [20]. However, many of these studies focus primarily on content trends or user behavior, without linking them to broader political-economic processes. This study addresses that gap by integrating Mosco's spatialization theory with platform governance to analyze power dynamics within Indonesia's X ecosystem..

## 2.6. Research Gaps and Contribution

While there is substantial literature on digital media, political economy, and X, few studies critically investigate how spatialization operates within algorithmically governed environments such as X in Indonesia. This study contributes to filling that gap by applying a hybrid theoretical lens and focusing on influential local accounts. It provides insights into how spatialization shapes not only what becomes visible and discussed on X but also who dominates the discourse and why.

## 3. Proposed Method

This study adopts a qualitative content analysis approach, combined with digital ethnography and critical discourse analysis (CDA), to investigate how media spatialization operates on Indonesian Twitter. The objective is to uncover how specific influential accounts participate in and reproduce power structures through algorithmically mediated communication. The research is conducted in four main stages.

### 3.1. Data Collection

Data were collected from four prominent Indonesian X accounts: @PartaiSocmed, @txtdrberseragam, @detikcom, and @kompascom. These accounts were selected based on their high engagement, thematic diversity, and influence in political, social, and media discourse. Tweets were gathered from December 2023 to December 2024, including original tweets as well as user interactions such as retweets, replies, and likes [1].

### 3.2. Analytical Framework

This analysis is based on Vincent Mosco's theory of spatialization, which is extended by integrating algorithmic governance as conceptualized by Kitchin [2] and Gillespie [3]. Spatialization mapping is possible in this hybrid framework not only in institutional or infrastructural terms, but also in symbolic and algorithmic forms. Key dimensions include control of visibility, framing of discourse, and commodification of data.

### 3.3. Content and Discourse Analysis

Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), the collected tweets were analyzed to identify patterns of representation, thematic framing, and ideological adjustment. CDA is considered suitable for explaining how language is used to reinforce dominant narratives and power relations in media content [4]. The main focus is specifically on hashtags, mentions, media usage, and tweet thread structure.

### 3.4. Synthesis and Interpretation

Finally, the findings of the discourse and network analysis are interpreted through the lens of digital political economy. With emphasis placed on understanding how Twitter's commercial logic and technological capabilities contribute to the spatialization of communication power in Indonesia.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This study finds that each X account exhibits distinct forms of spatialization, reflecting a range of strategies for achieving algorithmic visibility, fostering engagement, and managing control over public discourse.

### 4.1. @PartaiSocmed

The @PartaiSocmed account played a significant role in shaping political discourse during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. As shown in *Figure 1*, the account consistently supported the Prabowo-Gibran ticket through the use of hashtags such as #99ARMY. This hashtag not only served as a symbol of political support but also functioned as a means of forming a collective identity among supporters. In doing so, a digital community emerged, bound together by emotional narratives and symbolic elements that reinforced voters' attachment to the candidate.

From the perspective of media spatialization, these hashtags and digital symbols constitute a constructed symbolic space an arena where political messages are amplified, and shared sentiments are cultivated. This phenomenon reinforces Mosco's assertion that digital media is not merely a neutral medium but a structured arena that produces and reproduces political meaning and power.

AKURAT.CO Akun media sosial Partai Socmed mendeklarasikan dukungan terhadap pasangan capres Prabowo Subianto-Gibran Rakabuming Raka di Pilpres 2024 mendatang.

Dukungan disampaikan melalui akun X atau Twitter @PartaiSocmed pada Jumat (1/12/2023).

"SIKAP POLITIK 2024! Di hari yg baik ini kami menyatakan dukungan untuk Prabowo-Gibran sebagai Calon Presiden dan Wakil Presiden RI 2024-2029. Kepada para HANTU #99ARMY diinstruksikan untuk segera bangkit dari kuburnya masing2!" tulis @PartaiSocmed.

Figure 1. Official Political Endorsement by @PartaiSocmed for the Prabowo-Gibran Pair

The activity demonstrated by the @PartaiSocmed account reflects a high level of temporal synchronization, as seen from how supportive posts are distributed to coincide with important moments in the political calendar, such as presidential candidate debates, official declarations, and campaign periods. This temporal synchronization indicates that the account does not move spontaneously, but rather follows a planned, algorithm-based communication strategy. This approach takes advantage of real-time political dynamics to increase the reach

of messages and encourage maximum audience participation. In this context, social media algorithms play a key role in determining how visible political content is. This is emphasized by Al Fatih et al. [21], who show how algorithms contribute to the spread of digital political propaganda in the run-up to elections, especially by creating echo chambers and filter bubbles that reinforce users' pre-existing political tendencies.



Figure 2. Populist Incitement

The @PartaiSocmed account, as depicted in Figure 2, demonstrates an active role in shaping public opinion through aggressive digital populism. The use of provocative language such as "bandar judol" (online gambling kingpin) and "coordinator buzzer," along with visual depictions of political elites, reinforces symbolic representations of power and constructs conspiratorial narratives linking political elites with the digital economy. This reflects the spatialization of media, in which physical spaces such as elite meetings in restaurants are symbolically connected to digital platforms, producing a public perception laden with scandal. Nadzir (2021) emphasizes that digital media serves as a strategic medium for performative politics, reinforcing populist identity through symbols and narratives.

The narrative power of the account is sustained by the strategic use of algorithmic affordances. Content emphasizing conflict, extreme opinions, and powerful visuals tends to be prioritized by social media recommendation systems such as X. Tactics such as naming and shaming are deployed to steer public discourse against political opponents. Danaditya et al. [23] corroborate this phenomenon, highlighting the existence of coordinated orchestration within Indonesian Twitter discourse that utilizes specific hashtags and narratives to systematically polarize public opinion.

The @PartaiSocmed account positions itself as a representation of "ordinary people," which is sharply contrasted with the depiction of the political elite as corrupt and selfish. This approach emphasizes the account's populist identity by building a clear demarcation line between the ruling group and the governed people. As explained by Astanujati [24], this kind of anti-elite narrative often uses strong binary opposition to foster emotional loyalty from its supporters. In addition, this account appears to be careful in choosing the time to publish its content, often taking advantage of it ahead of important political moments such as the 2025 General Election. This strategy of using kairos shows that digital media not only functions as a channel for distributing information, but also as an arena for the struggle for meaning where symbols, algorithms, and emotions interact to shape political influence and public perception.

## 4.2. @txtdrberseragam

One concrete example of the media spatialization process in Indonesia is seen through the presence of the Twitter account @txtdrberseragam. This account is a digital communication platform that brings together various social narratives from the community. Through this platform, the public can access and share anonymous stories from individuals with uniformed professions, such as members of the police, military, or other law enforcement officers. These narratives are presented in the form of threads or quoted text, emphasizing personal experiences, emotional unease, and criticism toward the institutions in which the contributors work. Within Vincent Mosco's framework, this account can be categorized as a form

of symbolic spatialization, where individual experiences are mediated and disseminated through digital platforms to shape collective opinion within the virtual public sphere.

This spatialization is constructed through two primary mechanisms: affective intimacy and user-generated content. Affective intimacy refers to the way the account invites its audience to emotionally engage through stories that are relatable, honest, and often contain elements of social critique. The content not only provides entertainment or information but also offers a space for reflection on the relationship between society and institutions of power. This phenomenon illustrates how social media can expand the realm of interpersonal communication into a broader and ideologically charged social discourse.

Several studies support this interpretation. Herawati [25] from Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta found that @txtdrberseragam shapes public perception of civil servant professions through predominantly critical narratives that avoid institutional generalization. The study shows that the public is able to differentiate between criticism directed at individuals and that directed at the institution as a whole, indicating that the resulting spatialization remains within the bounds of social consciousness. Meanwhile, research by Wahyu and Mahendra [26] from Universitas Amikom Yogyakarta revealed that the consumption of content from this account affects public trust in the police, with most respondents indicating a moderate level of trust. These findings reinforce the notion that the account has a tangible influence on public perception in the context of the digital political economy.

From the perspective of political economy of communication theory, accounts like @txtdrberseragam also demonstrate how platform algorithms such as those on Twitter reinforce the spatialization of communication. Content that is emotional, personal, and viral is more likely to gain high visibility than formal, neutral institutional content. In other words, algorithmic structures play a key role in determining the distribution of social discourse, contributing to the formation of collective opinion about institutions of power. The account indirectly becomes an actor in the governance of spatialization by leveraging platform affordances to build networks of affect and alternative discourse outside the dominant narratives typically mediated by mainstream media.

Thus, @txtdrberseragam serves as a concrete example of how media spatialization in the digital political economy is not only determined by large corporations or conventional media but also by community-based digital actors who are capable of shaping critical symbolic spaces. This account blends affective, algorithmic, and symbolic political aspects, making it highly relevant for analysis within Vincent Mosco's perspective and contemporary approaches to the political economy of communication.

### 4.3. @detikcom

The digital activities of the @detikcom account throughout 2024 illustrate a significant practice of media spatialization, particularly in leveraging political and social moments to expand content distribution. During the presidential debate, for instance, Detikcom actively reported and disseminated netizen responses through the X platform, highlighting trending hashtags such as #DebatCapres, #GanjarSikatKorupsi, and #PilihPKSCoblosAMIN. This utilization of digital space demonstrates how media outlets position themselves as strategic managers of public information, in line with Mosco's concept of media spatialization.



**Putusan Sengketa Pilpres 2024 Trending di X, Ini Beberapa Tweet Netizen**

detikUpdate | 👁 14,508 Views | Senin, 22 Apr 2024 14:40 WIB

Sidang pembacaan putusan sengketa Pilpres 2024 di MK trending di Twitter/X. Warganet ramai ikut ngetweet, bahkan tweet mencapai 17 ribu.
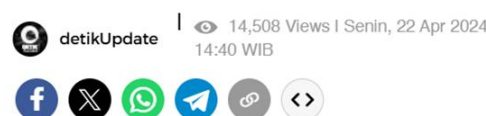
Figure 3. Constitutional Court decision dispute

Furthermore, Detikcom's coverage of public reactions to the 2024 presidential election dispute, which trended on X with over 17,000 tweets, highlights the media's role in mediating

the flow of information related to public policy and economic issues. Within the framework of the digital political economy, such patterns of information dissemination reflect the media's active role in framing discourse and shaping public perception in alignment with institutional interests [14][27]. Media platforms no longer function as neutral conduits of information; rather, they engage in a deliberate process of content selection and curation that carries clear political implications.

In addition, the reporting on public enthusiasm ahead of the 2024 vice-presidential debate, which also gained traction across digital platforms, demonstrates Detikcom's strategic effort to reach a broader and more diverse audience. This strategy involves the deployment of algorithms and user data analytics to enhance the temporal and emotional relevance of content delivery. Studies by Helberger et al. [28] and Mutsvairo and Ragnedda [29] emphasize that contemporary digital media increasingly depend on algorithmic infrastructures to maintain visibility and competitiveness within an oversaturated information environment.

Thus, Detikcom's practices of media spatialization through the X platform illustrate a significant transformation in the role of media as economic-political actors. Media outlets are no longer mere disseminators of information; they function as constructors of symbolic dominance through control over digital spaces. These activities reinforce their position within the digital capitalist system, a system increasingly governed by algorithmic logic and data ownership [30][31].

### 4.4. @kompascom



Figure 4. Ganjar's quote

*Figure 4* illustrates how @kompascom strategically leveraged the presidential debate as an opportunity to redistribute previously published, politically relevant content. This practice aligns with Vincent Mosco's concept of media spatialization, wherein digital space is utilized by media actors as an arena to reinforce specific narratives within a political context. Rather than relying solely on newly produced material, Kompas.com optimizes the value of existing content to capture public attention during key political moments. This strategy enhances the outlet's capacity to shape public political opinion, demonstrating how temporal relevance and content repurposing are instrumental in extending media influence in the digital sphere.



Figure 5. The Pertamina Case

*Figure 5* illustrates the role of media in disseminating information related to public policy and economic issues through digital platforms. Within the framework of the digital political economy, this form of information distribution demonstrates that media organizations function not only as providers of news but also as active agents that strategically utilize digital spaces to influence public opinion and policy discourse. This approach underscores the media's position as an institutional force within the digital sphere, one that possesses the capacity to shape socio-political and economic narratives on a broader scale.



Figure 5. voters in the 2024 regional elections

In addition, *Figure 5* illustrates how @kompascom utilizes the Twitter platform to reach a broader and more diverse audience. The use of social media reflects a deliberate media spatialization strategy aimed at expanding content distribution and reinforcing influence within an increasingly competitive digital environment. By optimizing the affordances of digital platforms, Kompas.com strengthens its position as a mainstream media outlet that remains relevant in the digital era, while simultaneously enhancing the impact of its news coverage on the social and political dynamics of society.

The three tweet examples collectively demonstrate how @kompascom, as a mainstream media institution, actively implements media spatialization strategies within the context of the digital political economy. The media's intensive use of digital space serves to extend its reach, shape public opinion, and solidify its role within a complex and dynamic structure of digital power. This strategy aligns with Vincent Mosco's argument that media no longer operate solely in physical space but also in a multidimensional digital realm, where meaning, influence, and power are continually negotiated.

This strategic deployment of digital platforms by mainstream media also resonates with recent scholarship on the hybridization of media logics in the digital age. Chadwick [11] emphasizes that media actors increasingly blend traditional and digital strategies to sustain influence in a fragmented information environment. Furthermore, studies by Al Fatih et al. [21] and Danaditya et al. [23] illustrate how algorithmically driven platforms such as Twitter enable media institutions to recycle and reframe existing content in response to ongoing political developments and audience sentiment. This tactic not only enhances content visibility but also contributes to political polarization by selectively amplifying narratives aligned with institutional or ideological interests.

Thus, Kompas.com's practices reflect an adaptive logic of survival and influence within the digital political economy, an environment where control over the temporal and emotional resonance of content is as critical as factual reporting itself.

## 6. Conclusions

The findings of this study reveal that the media spatialization practices carried out by various X accounts @PartaiSocmed, @txtdrberseragam, @detikcom, and @kompascom reflect diverse strategies in managing algorithmic visibility, public engagement, and influence over socio-political discourse in digital spaces. The @PartaiSocmed account implements an intense digital populism strategy, utilizing algorithms and emotional narratives to build symbolic attachments between supporters and the political figures they support, while positioning political elites as ideological opponents. This strategy shows how social media is utilized as a symbolic space in an effort to consolidate political power through mobilizing public support.

On the other hand, the @txtdrberseragam account represents another form of media spatialization, namely by presenting emotional narratives and inviting participation from grassroots communities, thus creating a space of expression for their collective experiences. Anonymous stories from uniformed workers are used to create discursive spaces that allow the public to reflect on the relationship between citizens and institutions of power. In this context, social media functions not only as a channel for interpersonal communication but also as a symbolic space of resistance against dominant official narratives.

Mainstream media accounts such as @detikcom and @kompascom adopt sophisticated strategies of institutional spatialization. These accounts capitalize on political moments to orchestrate the distribution of content that is temporally and emotionally relevant, aided by algorithms and user data. They no longer operate merely as information providers, but actively shape public opinion and dominate digital space for their institutional interests. Thus, media spatialization within the context of the digital political economy reflects a transformation in the role of the media from neutral reporters to strategic actors in the system of informational capitalism.

Based on these findings, scholars and communication researchers need to continue studying the impact of media spatialization on digital democracy, particularly in terms of how algorithms and emotional narratives influence public opinion formation and political participation. A multidisciplinary approach that combines media theory, digital sociology, and political economy is necessary to understand these dynamics comprehensively.

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