

# Didi Kempot: Masculinity and Actor in Circulation and Consumption in Industrial Revolution 4.0

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**Abstract—** Didi Kempot is a traditional Javanese singer seldom being discussed, however he is the unique case of digital phenomena. He is not only surpassing the young, global idol, but also show digital network of fandom works. By using digital and cultural production circulation as framework and perspective, this article shows contemporary digital network support the traditional music and able to made a fandom. Masculinity is the key to understand contemporary understanding of Javanese and national cultural feeling.

**Keywords—** Didi Kempot, digital network, masculinity, Javanese, music

## I. INTRODUCTION

The communication technology develops rapidly. Its development changes and influences some varieties of society's behavior. However, the changes can be planned because the technology possibly created spontaneously. The changes planned existences because of the human have desire to change it. Hence, the human created technology which can easier their activities. It is a proof that the society's changes were planned; it can be existence because of human plan to change by using technology mediator.

Culture changes in digital revolution 4.0, terms such as low-high, and popular culture [1], has been disrupt [2]. The digital platform change playfulness power in music [3][4], by innovation of the information technology, has impact social relationship, and cultural production. This article depict the everyday life of culture in time of digital revolution 4.0 in Indonesia. The digital revolution 4.0 is perceived as the strongest and fastest way to develop and to skip channeled and staged, evolutionary development.

Digital age develops new culture, such as the Korean popular culture swept the global world through television, gadget and their fandom are everywhere, exposed the borderless nation and region. In that instance, Didi Kempot phenomena is worth being discussed. Didi Kempot is a contemporary Javanese singer and music writer, however he gains a lot of fandom. Unlike the Korean Pop star such as BTS (Bangtan Boys), Blackpink which is young, group singer, with extravagance performance, Didi Kempot is rather old and single performance. Didi Kempot's fandom is frenzied, uploading his video and in 2019 Didi Kempot as key

word most searched on Google. As a case Didi Kempot depicts the situatedness of the Javanese, he is in the middle between the baby boomers and the millennial, between the modern and traditional, bridging the local to the global.

There is not so much study has been done in the traditional singer. There are some prominent names in the study of music in Indonesia such as Weintraub, Yampolsky, Hartley, but Didi Kempot as a contemporary phenomenon seldom being discussed. Indonesian academics take *campursari* as important element, and some of the works on Didi Kempot are mostly academic such as linguistic items. The Javanese language used by Didi Kempot are popular and easy to listen [5], and he convey way to ease social problem.

Music is more than just a singer and a song, there are mechanism to support it. The change from the analog to digital has shown the bankruptcy of the cassette producer and network of cassette store, the digital produce other mechanism usually called circulation. Didi Kempot phenomena talk about masculinity, although as social construction is not homogeny but there are similarity and differences [6]. In this instance, it is interesting to notice Didi Kempot as the social construction of Javanese masculinity, in the nation Indonesia. Such masculinity has to deal with the impact of women as worker and have wider mobility.

The digital era make possible the borderless global society, become the platform shares by many people, gender, nation and interest. Therefore, who is the actor behind digital platform and behind the success of Didi Kempot as traditional icon in the millennial casing? How is the local made global hits?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Political Circulation and Fandom

In the era of industry 4.0, culture become circulated object of information and communication technology. Algorithms and data expose individual text choices and it is a cultural production consume by many[7]. Consumption depict networks of individual, give reference to others of which to consume. Individual as well the influencer determines the taste. Fandom become important in politics of circulation [2].

Development of the ICT change Indonesia's music industry [8]. Such as Moore [9], describes the digital made possible the growth of indie band and a lot of various musical activity. Some hack Sony, the music industry of the labelled groups. According to Moore [9] individuals activities develop the indie music, from diverse genre. This development negotiates with government intention and policy and it influences the cultural policy in Indonesia, several of the indie groups made the debut in the national level. Dellyana and Simatupang [10] show the music industry change dramatically and all based in digital business platform. The traditional music industry also learned The digital based music industry, for example the success of iTunes become the lesson learned. Dellyana and Simatupang [10] map the music industry from the production to the social network, which is reflect the development of the new business.

Digital production is differ compare to the analog era. Interesting study from Nur Widya Ningrum, Putri Agus Wijayanti, dan Abdul Muntholib[11], show that cassettes support the development of *campursari* and *dangdut*. This article shows the existent of pirate, but in reality it shows the high demand of such music.

#### B. Circulation and Masculinity

In general masculinity means the social construction of maleness such as how do we perceive male educate them and socialized our generation into accepting masculinity construction. Masculinity is an issue in Music, such as Mick Jagger who has raised new meaning to masculinity. In a musical film called "Gimme Shelter", Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones strikes America's sexual norm and social class. His masculinity is against the middle class and a mixture of white and black masculinity with strong femininity [12]. It depicts differences and change from the Woodstock, the hippie generation to the Altamont. The rock music is not just a change in music genre but also the change of generation. The rock music show fandom increased consumption into millions and cross class and ethnicity.

Indonesian masculinity has change and continuity over Order. Carswell [13], show Indonesia's music video depict dominant male and subordinate female. The site of the video of the preformed music are not connected to specific Indonesia, but more to the singer and the song, the background is not so important scene. In her conclusion, the gender regime construct through the performance of femininity and masculinity that exposed binary gender construction is followed and influenced. There are three stereotype of masculinity, such as devout moslem, good behave young men and gang members [13]

Hellman [14] shows that traditional and national identity are inseparable entities as performing a nation. Institution and public sphere, such as the cultural activity, art, education institution and cultural politics explain the macro politics. Performing a nation miss the recent social change, such as internet and also ethnic position. This article suggests that the internet provide alternative Javanese and Indonesia masculinity.

As a nation Indonesia endures heavy burden, by the increased of the women or men migrant workers, which positions Indonesia as subordinate. Hellman made a good arguments using the performing as the base of his analysis, he provides with the cultural policy and cultural context. In

macro level, Indonesia endure several financial drawback and the economy is not as good as before. As an effect there is problem in working condition, such as pseudo unemployment, challenging masculinity.

### III. METHOD

This description uses text and other information in the social media as well as in other sources. Such information is treated as the primary data, in term that this article put the story, comments about him or from him as if a conduct interview. This article bases on the information within the internet. Internet provide us with sounds, lyric and interviews from several sources such as Youtube, Instragram, and Twitter [15]. These platform gives us ample information that might be interesting if we construct some meanings. this is the primary sources of the article.

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Didi Kempot : Local, National and Global Circulation

Didi Kempot runs the traditional Javanese masculinity by wearing traditional clothing, the *surjan*, but with glitter. Most of the traditional singers use *surjan* or *kebaya* [16] as a part of Javanese culture. Therefore, Didi Kempot claims the tradition but with little touch of modernity, he maintains his long hair to say that he has specific masculinity.

We can find Didi Kempot's performance through the social media such as video by @Jarkiyo, that shows the audience are mesmerized in the melancholic song "Cidro" (forgotten oath), in Taman Balekambang Solo in June 9, 2019. This performance is the turning point of Didi Kempot in the peak of his popularity. The grandiose of the performance describes by the @trialdino account as : "*Suasana surakarta sad boy club ketika menonton Godfather of broken heart "Didi Kempot" yang dipimpin langsung oleh @jarkiyo*" [17]. There are some importance element, the first is the audience shows middle to upper class, and they are young and moved by the music; the second Didi Kempot is famous for melancholic masculinity. A man who is betrayed by his partner or left behind in train station, his wife has to go abroad to earn a family income. The third the digital framework through video and other social media platform. The fourth is the fandom and the network of digital.

The digital platform has widen the audiences in Didi Kempot performances. The video become as important platform when an influencer @AgusMagelangan thread get a lot of attention in the Twitter. Talking in term of circulation, Didi Kempot reach widest audiences when Gofar Hilman, a radio broadcast from hard Rock FM radio and also a content creator produce *Ngobam (Ngobrol Bareng Musisi)* – fans meeting in Wedangan Gulo Klopo Kartosuro July 14, 2019. The event broadcast live di Youtube #NGOBAM Didi Kempot – *NGOBAM Offair Pertama* is an online event using Twitter, the fandom could ask anything and Didi Kempot would answer through twitter, this event has resulted a good trend in Youtube as well as Twitter [18].

Jarkiyo, a blogger from Solo initiates Sobat Ambyar or Didi Kempot's Fans Kingdom, states Didi Kempot as the father of *Loro Ati* – the father of broken heart. He also produces terms such as the sad girls to include female fandom and sadboys for male fandom. For the male fandom this melancholic masculinity not only able to increase the music

circulation but also get attention of younger generation. This generation is unique because they might not be able to speak Javanese and might have different culture to the older generation of the cassettes. To add more digital experience in traditional music, @AgusMagelangan, a local Tweet celebrity naming Didi Kempot as the Godfather of broken heart made circulation go global, superseding the local or Javanese, and the national. Not to mention, Gofar Hilman a young influencer represents the young urban that has made Didi Kempot circulation rise from local to national, to global.

Didi Kempot is an important actor in circulation, he produced the song, sang it and also made it public. His name came to the public in 1996 with his song *Solo Balapan*. *Solo Balapan* is a train station in Solo, in that place, a young man has to let her girlfriend go abroad and never come back. At that period Kempot's music is *campursari* genre and it distributes using analog by the cassettes, and the digital such as MP3, VCD/DVD. However, at that time the Javanese songs were consumed by the people who are able to speak and understand Javanese, not young anymore from Indonesia, Netherlands and Suriname. These last two countries are well known in the history of Javanese and Indonesia.

Didi Kempot's songs exhibit a consistent unhappy ending of the love stories. Masculinity is marginalized, different from the usual powerful, dominant male. Different from the general stereotype of devout Muslim, good-behaved young men and gang members [13].

After the *NGOBAM* event, Didi Kempot as actor and text are similar but have different circulation. The digital platform indeed changes the situation, YouTube and other social media channels speak to different audiences. As an effect Didi Kempot gets fans and a younger audience now love his song, including the millennial generation. Didi Kempot performances, made these young millennial hysterical and they move passionately and bodily as the song talks to their bodies. They accept the position of the marginal man in the unhappy ending of the love relationship.

Circulation in the social media platform pushes actors such as Didi Kempot as a worldwide trend. The comeback of Didi Kempot made him a marketable icon, Shopee – a platform of digital marketing uses him as their ambassador. Shopee twists it to *Ambyarssador*, a parody taken from Kempot's fandom name. This is a new wave as Shopee's last ambassador is Korean girl band Blackpink. Interestingly Tokopedia uses the Korea's BTS (Bangtan Sonyeondan/Bangtan Boys or Beyond the Scene) as its ambassador. Shopee and Tokopedia are competitors, but they develop an interesting conversation. Then Shopee's program 2.2 Men Sale consists of Didi Kempot in the advertisement using the parody of BTS, such as "tokopedia X BTS" and the tagline is "Bisa Tuku Saiki" in Javanese it means "You Can Buy Now".

### B. Political Circulations and Consumers Taste

The Taman Balekambang Live Event was the beginning of the formation of Sobat Ambyar's Fandom. The event was also the beginning where the object (video "CIDRO Live Taman Balekambang SURAKARTA") was circulated in a mobile infrastructure (social media) that involved Fandom Sobat Ambyar. Although this video starts the history of Didi Kempot's revival, the view has only 22,122 views and 2239 SHARES (March 15, 2020). Even though this is a milestone of the declaration of Sobat Ambyar's fandom. Now,

his existence can be seen through Instagram @ Sobat Ambyar which has 85.3k followers with 166 posts. Now the Ambyar fans' communities are developing in various regions.

Viewer live shows increased dramatically after the upload of #NGOBAM Didi Kempot - NGOBAM PERTAMMA (the first affair) 4,968,514 views (March 15, 2020). The climax was Didi Kempot & Buddy Ambyar Orchestra - Banyu Langit, Pamer Bojo 6/6 16,538,028 views Dec 8, 2019 189K6.5KSHARESAVE. Netmediatama 4.75 subscribers. Didi Kempot - "Pamer Bojo" Konangan Concert (29/09019) 12,199,349 views. 71K3.3KSHARESAVE 12.8M subscribers (March, 15, 2020). TRANS7 OFFICIAL. The presence of Sobat Ambyar made Didi Kempot's live show more interactive. Sad girls and sad boys expressions are part of the audience. They sing and yell together, shout like backing vocals that make live music more attractive. The presence of millennial fans made Didi Kempot's performance always feature handsome young drum musicians, and beautiful and attractive violinists.

### C. Masculinity and Broken Heart : Millenials Perspectives

Didi Kempot's songs have an egalitarian character than the previous generation, it gives women permission to work outside the home or even out of town or abroad. It shows opportunity as well as family loneliness, because long distance relationships (LDR) are common and shared experiences. Didi Kempot's lyrics such as *Solo Balapan*, *Layang Kangen* described the current phenomenon.

Another important value is to overcome heartbreak with fun. Another tag on Didi Kempot Live Show was "*patah hati tetapi tidak patah semangat*" (broken hearted but not discouraged" or heartbroken); or "*pacar lari dijogeti*" (when girl/boy friend leave, forget them by dancing). This is in accordance with the millennial sarcasm of what they call "*bucin*" or *budak cinta* or slaves of love.

## V. CONCLUSION

The digital network such as the Sobat Ambyar fandom pushes circulation faster and wider. Fandom Sobat Ambyar is a sub-culture in which a person is a member. Algorithm software shapes from one's cultural tastes to fandom. Interestingly the fandom got their meaningful experiences when they joined the concert.

Didi Kempot phenomena is still in the transition mode between the mainstream and digital media, because the most popular videos are still uploaded by mainstream media. However, it shows the digital platform made the possible into reality and it shows that digital activists play an important role to reach and mediate local, national and global areas.

Didi Kempot a bridge or the medium from the baby boomers to the millennial in construction of Javanese masculinity. To some extent it shows differences with the common stereotype of Javanese being mellow and seek for harmony. Kempot's songs show acceptance to complex conflict but behave as strong individuals. To some extent, he answers the gloomy social situation of many millennials.

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