

ARTICULATION OF SELAWAT CONCERT FANDOM IN THE CONTESTATION OF POPULAR CULTURE ARENA

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ABSTRACT. This article examines the articulation of the selawat concert fan community built in the digital space, specifically Instagram. This study analyzes content on Instagram related to Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers, and literature review. Selawat concerts are a phenomenon that positions hadrah groups (a group of people singing salawat accompanied by tambourines) as performers similar to pop music concerts. The arena of selawat concerts became popular after the emergence of participatory fan culture. In this context, the three groups—Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers—form an articulation to create a new meaning from the scattered elements that can be used to strengthen their cultural identity in line with the understanding of cultural theory. This paper explores Hall's multi-layered and interdisciplinary approach to identity. These communities, Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers, take advantage of society's consumerist culture, form their identity through social media, and do strategies such as making meetings and fund raising. These articulations are used to keep the concert selawat still existing.

Keywords: Selawat Concert; Syekher Mania; Zahir Mania; Syubban Lovers; Articulation.

ARTIKULASI FANDOM KONSER SELAWAT DALAM KONTESTASI ARENA BUDAYA POPULER

ABSTRAK. Artikel ini meneliti artikulasi komunitas penggemar konser selawat yang dibangun di ruang digital, khususnya Instagram. Studi ini menganalisis konten di Instagram terkait Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, dan Syubban Lovers dan studi pustaka. Konser selawat adalah sebuah fenomena yang menempatkan grup hadrah (sekelompok orang yang menyenandungkan selawat diiringi dengan tabuhan rebana) sebagai penampil layaknya konser musik pop. Arena konser selawat menjadi populer setelah adanya budaya partisipatori penggemar. Dalam konteks ini, ketiga grup yang menjadi objek penelitian—Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, dan Syubban Lovers—membentuk artikulasi untuk menciptakan sebuah makna baru dari ceceran berbagai unsur yang bisa dipakai untuk mengukuhkan identitas kultural mereka yang sejalan dengan pengertian terkait teori budaya. Makalah ini menelusuri pendekatan berlapis-lapis dan interdisipliner dari interpretasi identitas Hall. Ketiga komunitas ini memanfaatkan budaya konsumerisme anggotanya, membentuk identitas melalui media sosial, dan melakukan strategi komunitas berupa pertemuan rutin hingga penggalangan dana kolektif. Hal ini dilakukan sebagai artikulasi mereka untuk terus melanggengkan bentuk konser selawat di Indonesia.

Kata kunci: Konser Selawat; Syekher Mania; Zahir Mania; Syubban Lovers; Artikulasi

INTRODUCTION

Selawatan is the art of reciting prayers of salutation performed by a group of people, either together or in response to one another, with the accompaniment of tambourines and several local musical instruments (Indrawan, 2011). Selawatan is closely related to the commemoration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. One of the references in reciting selawat is the Book of Al-Barzanji, written by Ja'far ibn Hasan al-Barzanji, which contains the life story of the Prophet Muhammad and is usually read during the commemoration of the Prophet's birth by some Muslims in Indonesia (Mashur, 2017). Selawatan has become a routine in Islamic boarding schools (especially traditional Islamic boarding schools). The essence of reciting Al-Barzanji is the commemoration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad and the prayer to Allah for his salvation to be bestowed upon him (PBUH). In addition to

reciting Al-Barzanji, other poems are sung with the same essence, namely, remembering the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the outpouring of prayers. Reciting selawat accompanied by musical instruments is called *hadrah*.

The presence of *Ahbaabul Mustofa*, one of the *hadrah*'s groups that popularized a form of selawat different from traditional selawat, namely by introducing the concept of a concert into the selawat activity itself, has made the selawat tradition in Indonesia increasingly change. In addition to Al-Barzanji, the reference books used by *Ahbaabul Musthofa* are *Şimtud-durâr*, *Maulid al-Diba'i*, *Burdah*, and others. The using of Al Barzanji is considered because Habib Syech, the central figure of *Ahbaabul Musthofa*, is a descendant of the author of the book *Şimtud-durâr*, namely Habib Ali al-Habsyi from Hadramaut, Yemen (Fairuz, 2013:68). Furthermore, this selawat is not only presented during the Maulid celebration. Whenever and whoever

wants to hold a joint selawat, this *hadrah* group will come upon receiving the invitation.

In one of the Instagram posts from Majelis Sholawat Nusantara, there is a schedule for joint prayer services with Ahbaabul Musthofa in June 2024 for 14 points, but June 2024 does not coincide with the month of Maulid, which only starts on September 5, 2024. In the post, Ahbaabul Musthofa has implemented a franchise system, opening opportunities for regions to form Ahbaabul Musthofa by presenting the stage style and songs of Ahbaabul Musthofa, owned by Habib Syech. Rosyid (2021:120) said that Ahbabul Musthofa, as the prayer assembly (Zamhari and Howel: 2012), as a new Sufism religious movement (Woodward, et al: 2012), has established its base and members in many regions with certain standards as established by AM Tunggal Sari. In Cepogo District, there are 15 rebana groups with the same name. These indigenous practices continue to develop by fostering relationships with other groups or forming new rebana groups or assemblies.

The popularity of Ahbaabul Musthofa has attracted other *hadrah* groups from Islamic boarding schools to follow suit, adopting the pattern of selawat concerts equipped with a complete sound system, but still using yellow books as a guide for the lyrics performed. The concert model for selawat made by Habib Syech is different from the religious music performed by Haddad Alwi. From the beginning of his career, Haddad Alwi recorded in the studio and distributed his music through mp3s and officially sold cassettes (Fairuz, 2013:70). He (who often invites other religious singers to duet; Sulis; Anti; Vita; Yasmin Najma) deliberately entered the world of popular music through religious lyrics in Indonesian mixed with Arabic.

Other *hadrah* groups that are currently at the peak of popularity in the Selawat concert scene are Syubbanul Muslimin and Az-Zahir. On their Instagram accounts, their followers have reached 1.1 million (Syubbanul Muslimin) and 912 thousand (Az-Zahir). Ahbaabul Musthofa, based in Solo, does not have a central Instagram account; they are affiliated with Habib Syech, who currently has 2.4 million followers. Ahbaabul Musthofa, Az-Zahir, and Syubbanul Muslimin have fans called Syekher Mania (Ahbaabul Musthofa fans), Zahir Mania (Az-Zahir fans), and Syubban Lovers (Syubbanul Muslimin fans).

Selawatan, now a solo concert (often containing a message of advice), is no different from a pop concert attended by many people (look at figure 1). The fans come from the general public. They

form a community and network that surrounds the production of the selawat concert itself. The network built by the selawat concert audience continues to grow and form a new fandom in Indonesia. As a fandom, they transform from passive recipients of their idol's attention to active participants who can create their favorite idol through consumption. They build and adjust their identities through this role shift (Haoyang He, et al. 2021:420).



Source: Facebook Syubbanul Muslimin November 22, 2021 &

Source: Google.com

Figure 1. A comparison of popular music concerts (Noah Concert) and salawat performance (Syubbanul Muslimin)

This article will examine how Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers form their community identities in the digital space and employ strategies to maintain their cultural identities amid the prevailing popular culture.

METHOD

The method used in this article is a qualitative method. First, data collection was conducted through content on social media, especially Instagram, to examine how the selawat concert fan community — namely Syekher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers—form its identity. Second, the content was analyzed using Stuart Hall's articulation theory, which holds that the community will form articulations to create new meaning from scattered elements, thereby strengthening their cultural identity. Articulation acts as the production of identity, above differences, the unity of fragments, the structure across practices. Articulation connects practice with effect, text with meaning, meaning with reality, experience with politics, and these relationships then articulate themselves into larger structures. (Hall, 1996, p. 115). In addition to drawing on Instagram content, this article also draws on literature to provide data on the community being studied. Literature studies are studies used to obtain and collect information and data through written materials available in the library, such as documents, books, magazines, and so on (Mardalis, 1999 on Barasa, 2023:190).

Those methods are used to know how selawat fandom articulate their identity. Fandom can be

defined as a social and cultural phenomenon in which individuals, driven by deep emotional conviction and admiration toward particular figures or cultural products, actively construct meanings, express identity, and engage in participatory practices that reinforce their connection to popular culture (Duffett, 2013; Guschwan, 2012; Jenkins, 1992; Kozinets, 2001; Schau et al., 2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Ahbaabul Musthofa, Az-Zahir, Syubbanul Muslimin, and Consumerism in Society

Ahbaabul Musthofa was founded in 1998 in Solo, under the auspices of Habib Syech (Sarr, 2019). The concept of the concert, which was not initially initiated by Habib Syech, took on the same meaning as a pop music concert: a stage, an audience singing together, and a sound system, complete with pop stage accessories such as lights. The costumes worn by the Ahbaabul Musthofa group are also distinctive, namely, eastern-style robes. The musical instruments used are tambourines. This model is certainly different from the selawatan tradition in Islamic boarding schools and villages, which are generally circular. Ahbaabul Musthofa's appearance is well described by Saputri (2023:193) in her research entitled *Integrating The Culture of Zikir And Slawatan On The Commitment of The Maulid Nabi Muhammad*:

This ritual is generally performed at night between 9 pm. and 12 pm There is a dress code where people in attendance generally wear white. Men wear hats, turbans and scarves to cover their heads, while women use sails and scarves. All participants, including Habib Sheikh, sat on the ground. The procedure began after the arrival of Habib Sheikh and his entourage which included members of his group named Ahbabul Mustapha. Before that, most of the participants had come and were going to sit in their respective places, while songs from Dhikr and Habib Syekh were played to excite the audience. The tambourines (drummers) and supporting singers will sit in their respective positions and will test their equipment. The second part begins with the opening declaration and prayers. (Saputri, 2023:193)

The presence of Ahbaabul Musthofa become a new wave in the practice of selawat in Indonesia. Habib Syech has transformed the performance of selawat in Indonesia from an intimate to a public occasion by initiating concerts with the support of

well-organized technical teams and musicians, as well as local and regional officials. The concerts use sophisticated lighting and sound systems and video screens to accommodate the large crowds, and require a day to set up (Woodward et al., 2012, 124–125).

In addition to being interesting, the form of the selawat concert popularized by Ahbaabul Musthofa also seems to lift the veil on religious traditions considered exclusive and unreachable by the general public. People who only have time after work can still carry out this “blessed” activity while having light chats. Selawat activities that were initially heavy and could only be performed with solemnity can now be enjoyed while relieving fatigue.

Habib Syech and the group have transformed the performance of Slawatan from its traditional space in the Pesantren to the public space, in rural and urban city centers. (Sarr, 2019:106)

In the end, the public felt that they owned this space. The crowds coming to the selawat concert event increased. The demand for a new form of selawat emerged, and along with that, new names emerged besides Ahbaabul Musthofa, who followed the pattern and system of concert-style selawat. In 2005, Syubbanul Muslimin was present in the community. According to its founder, Gus Hafid, Syubbanul Muslimin targeted young people to be close to religion through music that was easy to accept. Syubbanul Muslimin came under the auspices of the Nurul Qadim Kali Kajar Kulon Paiton Probolinggo Islamic Boarding School. The vision of the formation of Syubbanul Muslimin is to “Ground selawat” through the mission of forming intelligent, civilized, religious, nationalist youth, as successors to the nation and religion (Laili, 2017:54).

Majlis Syubbanul Muslimin is also often invited abroad, including China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, to recite the prayers of the Prophet Muhammad SAW accompanied by hadrah music. (<https://probolinggo.inews.id/>)

Laili (2017) added that Syubbanul Muslimin itself visited Ahbaabul Musthofa Probolinggo intending to develop a model of salawat that the community could accept.

Meanwhile, Az-Zahir emerged in 2016 from the Az-Zahir Islamic Boarding School in Widoro Village, Krejengan District, Probolinggo Regency. The founder of this hadrah group is Habib Ali Zainal Abidin Assegaf. Initially, this assembly was called only the Maulid Assembly, but when they were about to hold a Grand Maulid, the congregation asked Habib Ali Zainal Abidin bin Assegaf to name it. This

assembly was finally named the Az Zahir Assembly (radarsemarang.jawapos.com).

In organizing a selawat concert, the audience does not fund it through ticket purchases like at pop concerts. Some actors prepare the concert and pay the hadrah group to come. Usually, these actors have certain interests, such as commemorating the Prophet's Birthday, commemorating the anniversary of an agency, inaugurating a building, or attending personal events such as weddings and/or circumcisions. Consumerism in selawat concerts is evident in the number of audience members who attend when the concert is held. High purchasing power is partly influenced by the relationship formed between the audience and the performers, namely, the audience is invited to sing along and experience the selawat experience with the thousands of people who attend.

Habib Syech's handling of the concert made it participatory, as the audience contributed to both the production and consumption of the music, thus reproducing some of the qualities of community-level selawat (Rasmussen, 2010).

By the figure that uploaded in syekhassegaf, syubbanul mislimin, and majlisazhahir's Instagram account, showed how the selawat concert model really gets very crowded. So many people were attended for this model of selawat like pop concert does. At every concert by the three groups above, more than a thousand people attended. Rosyid (2021:140) clearly states what a selawat concert looks like:

The participants were not standing like most people would do in a concert, all of them were sitting down on the floor. Along with the music of rebana from the second stage facing the main one, the participants were reciting shalawat right after the chairman of the committee delivered the opening speech. When one of the committees ignited the incense in front of the main stage, they enunciated shalawat, following the certain relatively static tone while placing their hands on the air. There were also some who were very still, waving flag, video-recording the event with their phone, and even closing their eyes for about two hours.

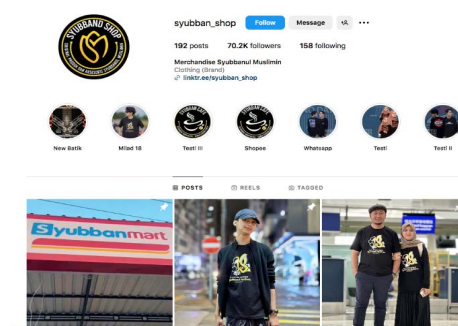
This explanation is precisely like the selawat concerts that I have attended several times in Central Java, especially in Banyumas. This consumerism phenomenon has the same pattern. The audience will arrive with their entourage on motorbikes or buses, then follow the concert series from the muqaddimah to the mahalul qiyam.

The event ended with mahalul qiyam. As the participants stood together, the scent of the

on-alcohol perfume filled the air again. The music of rebana stopped for a while, then the audience sang "Allahumma salli wa sallim 'ala Muhammad" together, closing their eyes, and placing both hands in the air. Then, continued by singing "Marhaban, marhaban, ya nurol 'aini..." (Welcome, welcome, the light of my heart). Prior to end of the final prayer, Habib Syech led to sing the national anthem "Indonesia Raya" along with the audience. After that, he prayed for the health of the sick, for those who passed away, for wealth, for the students to pass their exams, for the youth to earn a decent job, and for the single to get married soon. (Rosyid, 2021:141)

The audience's enthusiasm is what makes many people want to hold a selawat concert by inviting famous hadrah groups. The more famous the hadrah group, the more people will come. The large number of people who came was also used by traders to sell various souvenirs related to Islam, such as peci, scarves, prayer beads, and even photos of the hadrah group figures who performed as reported by mettanews.id title *Pedagang Peci Raup Untung Hingga jutaan Rupiah di Tahlil Akbar dan Sholawatan Bung Karno*, written in 24th June 2024.

Unfortunately, there is not much digital data available for the selawat concert venue. However, in the digital space, consumerism is shown in the creation of souvenirs that can be ordered online. (Figures 2, 3, 4)



Source: Instagram.com/syubban.shop

Figure 2. Instagram account syubban_shop, which sells Syubbanul Muslimin souvenirs



Source: Shopee.co.id

Figure 3. Az-Zahir T-shirt sold for Rp. 65,000 on Shopee



Source: Shopee.co.id

Figure 4. Syekher Mania stickers scattered in the electronics market

The focus of selling various souvenirs is not only on the performers, but also on products that are themselves. One example is the picture above. The product is intended for Syekher Mania. There is pride in oneself for being part of a community. Turner (1993:xiii) states this phenomenon as follows: “The modern consuming self is a representational being.” It is the body’s surface, which is the target of advertising and self-promotion, just as it is the body’s surface that is the site of stigmatization. Another example from this phenomenon is the calendar that drew Habib Syechs’ figur sold by toko.habibsyech on Instagram.

The form of consumerism is not present in the purchase of tickets for selawat concerts, but rather from material objects sold by freelance traders or official accounts of related hadroa groups. When Ahbaabul Musthofa is said to be an agency that seeks to change the structure of selawat itself, then consumers —in this case, fans of selawat concerts — who have also become agencies that capture signals of change and act as agents of change. They understand themselves and their world, then express it through religion, rituals, clothing, music, and things related to the selawat concerts they enjoy.

2. Making Identities

Individuals and society are interrelated in constant reciprocal dependence; the particular behavior of individuals in various contexts gives a community its boundaries and cultural identity just as the normative standards of a community regulate the practices of individuals and groups within it (Masolo, 2002). The community responded to the existence of this selawat concert through digital spaces, networking, and the creation of regulations for their respective groups. In the digital space, fan accounts were created to inform about the nearest selawat concert they could reach. These three communities all have accounts that are managed independently in each region. Each account in the region has a different

logo that carries elements from the original logo of the hadrah group that is the center of their movement.

- Syekher Mania

Ahbaabul Musthofa center does not have an official Instagram account. It has become a franchise of hadrah groups in the regions. However, there is a Syekher Mania Pusat account with 198,000 followers as of December 2024. The Syekher Mania Central account is followed by more than 30 Syekher Mania accounts (using the Syekher Mania logo) spread throughout Indonesia. It seems that all Syekher Mania accounts in Indonesia follow this account.

The form of similarity used by Syekher Mania on Instagram features a logo depicting a handshake between a yellow hand and a white hand, with the writing SYEKHERMANIA in a circle above the handshake, followed by the name of the region in a circle below the handshake.

- Syubban Lovers

Just like Syekher Mania, Syubban Lovers also has a central account with the account name Syubban Nusantara. However, the Syubban Lovers Nusantara account logo is not used as a pattern for regional Syubban Lovers.

Each region has its own coordinator account and a different logo. The coordinator accounts use Syubbanul Muslimin calligraphy visuals framed with graphics forming a mosque building. What characterizes Syubban Lovers is the phrase “Istiqomah Tanpa Batas” in each logo.

On each coordinator account, there is a link to the Syubbanul Muslimin account, the coordinator account itself, and the administrator account for that account.

- Zahir Mania

If Syekher Mania and Syubban Lovers have a central account, Zahir Mania does not have one. Zahir Mania is immediately divided into accounts followed by the name of the region behind it. The logo used has a black background and different variations for each region, but still has similarities, namely the presence of a gold badge pointing upwards, like the Az-Zahir logo itself.

Each Instagram account of this selawat concert fan community always includes their respective Youtube links which produce recordings of selawat concerts in their area.

3. Community Strategy

To establish their identity as fans of selawat concerts, both Syekher Mania and Zahir Mania, as well as Syubban Lovers, use strategies on their Instagram accounts. Their existence as consumers

of selawat concerts will encourage the production of other concerts that they can enjoy. As explained, all fans here do not buy tickets to attend their favorite group's selawat concert. However, their strategy to revive their own community is an effort to perpetuate the culture of selawat concerts so that they continue to exist.

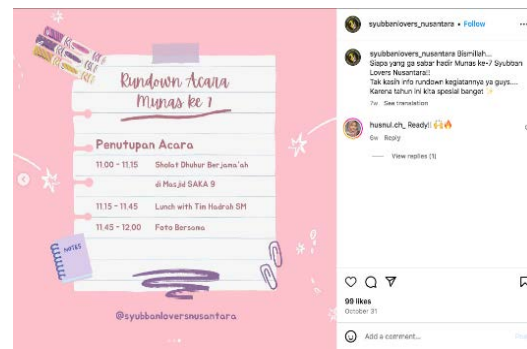
One of the strategies carried out by Zahir Mania is to use their Instagram account to open up opportunities for collaboration with sponsors and the media to support the selawat concert they want to hold. They manage their ecosystem so that it is empowered and realizes the concert they dream of. In this case, their position is more than just consumers. Fans are said to be more than just consumers, considering their commitment to maintaining a complex interpretation of their object of worship consumption (Guschwan, 2012; Jenkins, 1992; Kozinets, 2001; Schau et al., 2009). In the post on December 6, 2024, Zahir Mania Purbalingga opened sponsorship for the 5th Harlah Zahir Mania Purbalingga, which Az-Zahir or Al Habib Ali Zainal Abidin bin Assegaf did not even attend. The phrase 'CALLING OUT SPONSOR DAN MEDIA PARTNER' appeared in three lines on a blue background. The first and third lines were colored white, whereas the second line was rendered in green and black. That was uploaded on 6th Desember 2024 in *zahir_mania_purbalingga*'s Instagram account. They actually invited another guest star, namely Al Habib Alwi Zahir Al Habsyi.

Another strategy is done by Syubban Lovers Bojonegoro. On their account, there is a post in the form of a *snapgram* that is *highlighted* in the form of how to join the Syubban Lovers Bojonegoro WhatsApp group. The WhatsApp group indicates that this community network is not only growing on Instagram social media, but also on media for more private communication, namely WhatsApp.



Source: Instagram.com/koorda_syubbanloversbojonegoro

Figure 5. Highlights on the Instagram account *koorda_syubbanloversbojonegoro*



Source: Instagram.com/koorda_syubbanloversbojonegoro

Figure 6. Highlights on the Instagram account *koorda_syubbanloversbojonegoro*

After being founded in 2005, Syubban Lovers Nusantara declared its community in 2017. Every year, the National Conference is held on November 9th. One of the posts inviting Syubban Lovers to attend the 7th National Conference informs the activities that will take place. Starting from breakfast together, heading to the SAKA 9 location, registration, dhikr and tahlil together, salawat by the Syubbanul Muslimin hadrah team, opening, welcoming speech by the central coordinator, arrival of khodimul majlis, games with the Syubbanul Muslimin hadrah team, congregational Dhuhur prayer, lunch with the Syubbanul Muslimin hadrah team, group photo. The annual National Conference event is also broadcast live on YouTube by each regional coordinator's Syubban Lovers.

The network created through digital doors led them to meet each other. From initially not knowing each other and not greeting each other at the selawat concert, they were united because they met on social media to then follow up on a physical meeting like shown in *syubbanlovers_nusantara* Instagram account on March, 27th 2021 that announced about meet up syubban lovers Padang agenda.

All the prashes written in both English and Indonesian.

Meet Up Syubban Lovers Padang

Some to the 8th meet up!

Maret 28, 2021

10 AM

Taman Imam Bonjol Padang

Dresscode:

Akhwat - Khimar hitam dan non celana

Ikhwan - Peci, koko, dan sarung/celana

JANGAN LUPAIN UANG KAS 10K

PATUHI PROTOKOL KESEHATAN

These effort led to the construction of the identity they wanted to build as fans of the selawat concert. In accordance with Chen Y's assumption regarding fans

who stated that “*Fans are united by the virtual label as a demand for independent individuality and a need to seek community identity. This label distinguishes fans from the general audience, allowing them to construct themselves through the recognition of the online community for their sense of identity*” (Chen Y, 2013:420).

In constructing their identities as fandoms, both Syekhher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers use Instagram to declare themselves part of the selawat concert culture, which has been booming lately. The massive selawat concerts were certainly influenced by the 2019 Covid pandemic which had frozen all mass activities, especially those involving crowds. Only after the pandemic ended did selawat concerts become popular again, leading to changes: during Covid, their value was diverted through social media, especially Instagram. Maulana (2024) stated that after the pandemic, Syekhher Mania made a significant breakthrough in its efforts to re-emerge and revive selawat concerts. Many concerts had even been held before the official revocation of PPKM was issued on Friday, December 30, 2022.

It is undeniable that selawat concerts have become part of society, offering entertainment value helps people escape the hustle and bustle of routine. This entertainment is affordable in terms of material and ease of access. Therefore, some people take part in this new arena as one of the pillars to preserve selawat concerts. Taking this role begins with the establishment of their identity through accounts created by the community itself (Syekhher Mania, Zahir Mania, and Syubban Lovers). The high activity of the accounts allows them to continue to reach their followers and legitimize themselves to then form a wider network in the physical realm.

I argue that all of their activities are not only driven by one person (personal) as a fan—an individual who possesses a deep emotional attachment and admiration toward a particular celebrity, cultural product, or creative work. This attachment is often expressed through recognition of the subject’s style, creativity, or symbolic meaning (Duffett, 2013), but they did all of those activities communally that make them as fandoms.

The construction of their identity cannot be separated from the symbols of the hadrah groups they like. From the name, logo, and links to each of their idol groups. According to Hall, identity, before successfully constructing itself, must go through the perspective of others (1991:21). The pattern that is trying to be built by centering on the idol hadrah group is followed by the formation

of fan accounts in each region to strengthen the identity of selawat concert fans further.

The identity that has been formed is then maintained through account activities that cross information between one community and another. Neither Syekhher Mania, Zahir Mania, nor Syubban Lovers have ever been recorded as doing anything contradictory in their efforts to defend themselves or outdo each other. Almost all communities (in this study) use Instagram accounts primarily to provide information about selawat concerts in the next month and to document selawat concerts that have already taken place.

The identities and strategies discussed in this article are also used by them to gain additional benefits, such as forming new commodities that are certainly beneficial to all parties. They empower themselves: from them to them. In common sense, identification is built on common or shared characteristics; in this case, it can also be considered as a shared meaning with other people or groups, or with an ideal, and with the solidarity and loyalty created on this basis (Hall, 1996, p. 2)

CONCLUSION

Selawat concerts, a phenomenon in Indonesia, are not solely driven only by the producers, in this case the hadrah/majelis groups that organize them. Over time, fan participation has become key to the popularity of this form of selawat. In accordance with the expression (Jenkins, 2006b: 41) that participatory culture implies that consumers change from mere spectators to fans who are involved in several types of cultural activities, by sharing feelings and thoughts about program content with friends, and by joining a ‘community’ of other fans who share the same interests.

The articulation of this form of selawat by Syekhher Mania, Syubban Lovers, and Zahir Mania through digital media demonstrates the crucial role of consumers in the sustainability of a cultural product. Moreover, they negotiate a new meaning of *selawatan* as a popular culture like a concert and act like a popular fandom. They also perform their identities through the merchandise they buy, and reinterpreted through shared experiences by meetings.

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