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Performing Gender to Dangdut's Drum: Place, Space, and Infrastructure in Indonesian
Popular Music

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Music

by

Andrea Louise Decker

June 2016

Thesis Committee:

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Performing Gender to Dangdut's Drum: Place, Space, and Infrastructure in Indonesian Popular Music

by

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Master of Arts, Graduate Program in Music
University of California, Riverside, June 2016
Dr. René T.A. Lysloff, Chairperson

Few genres of popular music around the world are more infamous for objectification of women's bodies than dangdut, a popular dance music of Indonesia, which has thrived among audiences of lower classes for more than forty years. In *Dangdut Stories: A Social and Musical History of Indonesia's Most Popular Music*, Andrew Weintraub credits dangdut's popularity in part to its easy danceability. The steps are simple: back and forth, in duple meter, a basic step anyone can join or elaborate upon. But not all choreographies of dangdut are so simple to perform. Dangdut artists try to make a living as musicians in an industry that sees them as expendable and devalues their skills. They innovate new dances, deliberately sexualize themselves, and sensationalize their acts to draw crowds and get the attention of record companies and television stations. In the rare case that they attract industry attention, however, the tastes of the middle-class and national laws regarding television require them to clean up, to de-sexualize, to reframe their identities. For women aspiring to careers as dangdut performers, the choreography is complex, coded, and competitive, and involves a careful balance of perceived femininity, sexuality,

and morality. Focusing on three case studies of singers signed to the Indonesian recording label Nagaswara, Indonesia's largest producer of dangdut, I follow the steps dangdut singers take to craft their public identities in the face of fierce competition. I begin by analyzing the constructions of gender demonstrated in two music videos by singer Devy Berlian, a dangdut performer with a K-pop background now famous for incorporating hip-hop elements. I then discuss Fitri Carlina, a musician from East Java who, through the use of Instagram and Twitter accounts, distances herself from her sexual musical videos and her controversial past to present a conservative, Islamic persona. Finally, I examine public responses to Zaskia Gotik, a highly popular and successful dangdut musician who belittled the Indonesian creed Pancasila on a gameshow and as a result was interrogated by Indonesian police, threatened with a prison sentence, and publically shamed on social media.

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Introduction

On Sunday, April 4th, 2016, Irma Bule sang and danced to her death. In the middle of the second song of her performance in a village in West Java, Bule, who was known for wearing live snakes as she danced, accidentally stepped on a cobra. It retaliated by biting her in the thigh. Forty-five minutes later, Bule collapsed onstage and began to vomit. She was rushed to a hospital where she later died.

Several Indonesian news articles sensationalized her death, posting a video claiming to show the moment of the bite. This sensationalism in death matched the techniques to which she resorted in life; known for her “snake dance” moves, Bule knew that performers in that area who danced with snakes were paid more. Made Supriatma, an Indonesian journalist, claimed that Bule also used snakes to protect herself from being groped by audience members, knowing that because of her position as a dangdut performer her male audience members would assume her to be sexually available. He writes,

Competition has become very tight for dangdut singers, especially for women. Singers innovate as much as possible to attract attention. It’s not enough just to have a nice voice. Singers are innovating through dance; they’re exploiting sensuality as much as they’re able (Made Supriatma 2016)¹

¹ *Persaingan menjadi penyanyi dangdut sangat ketat. Terutama bagi perempuan. Para penyanyi berinovasi sebisa mungkin untuk menarik perhatian. Suara bagus saja tidak cukup. Para penyanyi berinovasi lewat goyangan. Mereka mengeksploitasi sensualitas sebisaanya* (Made Supriatma 2016). All translations are mine, with input from my thesis committee chairperson, Dr. René Lysloff.

Few genres of popular music around the world are more infamous for the objectification of women's bodies than dangdut, a popular dance music of Indonesia, which has thrived among audiences of lower classes for more than forty years. In *Dangdut Stories: A Social and Musical History of Indonesia's Most Popular Music*, the seminal work covering dangdut's history from 1945 to present focusing on class, nation, and gender, Andrew Weintraub credits dangdut's popularity in part to its easy danceability (2010: 83). The dance, called *joget* or *goyang*, is simple: back and forth, in duple meter, a basic step anyone can join or elaborate upon. But not all choreographies of dangdut are so simple to perform. For women aspiring to careers as dangdut performers, the choreography of a dangdut career is complex, coded, and competitive, and involves a careful balance of perceived femininity, sexuality, and morality. Like Irma Bule, dangdut artists try to make a living as musicians in an industry that sees them as expendable and devalues their skills. Dangdut artists innovate new dances, deliberately sexualize themselves, and sensationalize their acts to draw crowds and get the attention of record companies and television stations. In the rare case that they attract industry attention, however, the tastes of the middle-class and national laws regarding television require them to clean up, de-sexualize, and reframe their identities.

Choreography and Performance of Gender

Because I enjoy it so much,
Without even realizing it,
My hips begin to shake and I feel like I want to sing.
-Rhoma Irama, “Terajana”²

In her 1998 article “Choreographies of Gender,” Susan Leigh Foster uses dance studies theory to expand upon the notion that gender is performative. She writes, Choreography, the tradition of codes and conventions through which meaning is constructed in dance, offers a social and historical analytic framework for the study of gender, whereas performance concentrates on the individual execution of such codes. Choreography resonates with cultural values concerning bodily, individual, and social identities, whereas performance focuses on the skill necessary to represent those identities. Choreography presents a structuring of deep and enduring cultural values that replicates similar sets of values elaborated in other cultural practices, whereas performance emphasizes the idiosyncratic interpretation of those values. (Foster 1998: 6).

² *Karena asyiknya aku
Hingga tak kusadari
Pinggul bergoyang-goyang rasa ingin berdendang*

Foster argues that choreography, like performativity, encompasses series of conventions and norms, but is a more useful term because it comprises bodily articulations in addition to verbal ones, a limit she argues exists in theories of gender performance from thinkers like Judith Butler and J. L. Austin. Choreography is, therefore, a better term because it emphasizes the unspoken actions that make up gender identity. It also concentrates attention on how the codes and conventions of gender, both spoken and unspoken, are interrelated.

I will use this framework and vocabulary to discuss the careers of dangdut musicians, who are dancers as much as they are singers. Each dangdut singer attempts to create her own signature dance style, called *goyang*. A *goyang* that unambiguously references sex acts will get attention at large outdoor dangdut competitions, but may hinder later career development when the musician transitions to heavily censored television performances. The most famous example of this struggle is the case of Inul Daratista, whose *goyang ngebore* or drill dance grew popular in East Java in the early years of the 21st century. She would rotate her hips in wide circles at a rapid pace, positioned with her backside to the audience, to the delight of her audience. However, when recordings of her performances spread across Java through VCDs, she became the target of anti-pornography laws. Inul's case demonstrates the importance of choreography for dangdut musicians. It also shows how media infrastructure and practices of consumption shape dangdut musician's careers, expanding Foster's theoretical framework to include gendered choreographies mediated by newly developed technologies.

Focusing on three case studies of singers signed to the Indonesian recording label Nagaswara, Indonesia's largest producer of dangdut, I follow the steps dangdut singers take to craft their public identities in the face of fierce competition. I begin by analyzing the constructions of gender demonstrated in two music videos by singer Devy Berlian, a dangdut performer with a K-pop background now famous for incorporating hip-hop elements. In two of her music videos, I consider how gender is associated with music, dance, color, space, and modernization. I then discuss Fitri Carlina, a musician from East Java who, through the use of Instagram and Twitter accounts, distances herself from her sexual musical videos and her controversial past to present a conservative, Islamic, persona. Finally, I examine public responses to Zaskia Gotik, a highly popular and successful dangdut musician who belittled the Indonesian creed Pancasila on a gameshow and as a result was interrogated by Indonesian police, threatened with a prison sentence, and publically shamed on social media.

Like popular music stars the world over, dangdut musicians are highly visible public figures represented both by themselves and others in media sources. I have selected three case studies that allow some investigation into how gender performance and perception changes through different media forms. In Devy Berlian's case, I look at her performance in music videos. For Fitri Carlina, I examine a media she controls: her Instagram feed. For Zaskia Gotik, I consider representations of her over which she has nearly no control, mainly portrayals in online news and other media outlets. Each of these dangdut musicians follows the same choreography of the identity, similar expected

moves and public personas, necessary for career success. At the same time, each musician chooses, or is required by circumstance, to perform the steps in a different way.

My research methods on this topic have been unusual for ethnomusicology. Rather than utilizing ethnographic methods, focusing on local discourse, I instead offer close ethnographic readings of music videos, photos on Instagram, and other media texts, in addition to personal interviews, most of which were conducted online. I chose this methodology because the subject of this work, the manner in which women dangdut musicians perform gender in the precarious situations of new media technologies and the liminal space they present. As a result, media technologies themselves were my field, and the texts flowing through them my discourse. Just as they perform identity to their fans through media, I read their identities and interact with them through media.

Dangdut Intersections

Dude, choose which you want: virgin or divorcée

A virgin sure is charming, but a divorcée is more enticing.

Dude, choose which you want: virgin or divorcée

A virgin sure is pretty, but a divorcée is more attractive.³

-Cita Citata, "Perawan atau Janda"

³ *Abang pilih yang mana: perawan atau janda*
Perawan memang menawan, janda lebih menggoda
Abang pilih yang mana: perawan atau janda
Perawan memang cantik, janda lebih menarik

But what is dangdut? How did it develop as a musical genre with such particular demands on women's bodies? In my summary of dangdut's history, origins, and significance, I rely upon Andrew Weintraub's *Dangdut Stories: A Social and Musical History of Indonesia's Most Popular Music*, the first book-length discussion of dangdut by a scholar. In his review of *Dangdut Stories*, David Harnish writes, "Weintraub has convincingly identified dangdut not only as a music phenomenon with its demarcating and authenticating aesthetics, but also as a sociopolitical force that unifies communities and is intrinsically wrapped up with nationalism, religion, ethnicity, gender, power, and sexuality" (Harnish 2013: 535-536). *Dangdut Stories*' historical orientation makes it a crucial text for situating dangdut.

Dangdut's origins as a musical form have become legendary – how the king of dangdut Rhoma Irama, Elvy Sukaesih, and other *orkes Melayu* and pop Indonesia musicians of the late 1960s blended Indian-derived *orkes Melayu* with the sounds and attitudes of US-American and British rock 'n' roll. Dangdut's meanings and history have hardly remained stable, however. Andrew Weintraub writes, "Denigrated as a debased form of popular culture in the early 1970s, dangdut was commercialized in the 1980s, resignified as a form of national and global pop in the 1990s, and localized within ethnic communities in the 2000s" (Weintraub 2010: 12). Along with the symbolic changes, musical elements have changed as well, with rock, *keroncong*, Indian film music, and Electronic Dance Music (EDM) elements like synthesizers and drum machines coming in and out of fashion. The causes of these shifts in fashion, involving a tug of war between many forces, is beyond the scope of this paper. However, a brief account of crucial issues

at play in dangdut is necessary before I can analyze how these issues continue to influence dangdut.

Throughout its history, dangdut has been called the music of “the *rakyat*,” meaning the common people, the majority, working-class Indonesians. Rhoma Irama, the “king of dangdut,” says, “Dangdut has become so popular because it is so basic to the soul of indigenous people” (quoted in Weintraub 2010: 83). Weintraub connects dangdut’s popularity with the common people to its association with orkes Melayu, its danceable rhythm, and lyrics that were both comprehensible to a wide swath of the population and dealt with everyday issues. On the other hand, he also argues dangdut was deliberately classed through marketing: “Dangdut was placed in relation to other competing genres of popular music in order to make distinctions among different classes of people” (Weintraub 2010: 107). In the 1970s, dangdut was called “backward,” associated with streets and food stalls, while rock and pop, more often played in nightclubs and bars, was associated with the economically privileged.

As a result, dangdut became an important ground for defining what it meant to be “the common person.” For Indonesian music journalists, the *rakyat* was “uneducated, ignorant, and irrational” (Weintraub 2010: 106). For many dangdut artists, they were noble in spirit, representing the true Indonesia. Some, including Rhoma Irama, saw the *rakyat* as a potential danger, an easily manipulated crowd that could, with little provocation, descend into riots and rapes. Irama says, “My principle is that music has to be able to shape the people. If we want them red, they’ll turn red. If we want them white, they’ll turn white [...] We need music that can entertain in order to motivate people and

educate people. Drunks will stop drinking. Rude people will become pleasant. Non-believers will become believers. All from music” (as quoted in Weintraub 2010: 88).

The working class connotations of dangdut implicate gender connotations. The *rakyat* in popular imagination is gendered male, as is the crowd at any large, public dangdut concert. Many women I talked to feared to be seen at concerts late at night because of risks to their reputation. Women are largely left out of the imaginary of the *rakyat*, even though in their homes, on their cellphones, at parties, and at family karaoke centers, they are avid fans and participants. Who are the *rakyat* really? Weintraub points out, “in popular print media, dangdut’s audience was largely absent as the author of its own representation” (Weintraub 2010: 83). The same criticism can be leveled at scholars of Indonesian popular music, who tend to discuss the spectacular and controversial iterations of dangdut consumed by men over the perspectives of women dangdut consumers, whose voices are strong on dangdut gameshows but silent within the literature (see for example Pioquinto 1995, Wallach 2009, and Weintraub 2010).

Dangdut’s relation to the working class and the poor within the imaginary has not precluded record labels and television stations from attempting to market dangdut to middle class audiences, broadcasting dangdut music videos and television dramas into private homes, where women, who regardless of income are associated with a higher class than men, could consume dangdut without risking their reputations. This marketing strategy also involved stylistic changes. The industry began to employ singers who used a more “pop” style of singing, and music videos became more elaborate, demonstrating conspicuous consumption, showing singers in glamorous evening wear or driving sports

cars. Concerning this period in dangdut history, singer Camelia Malik told Weintraub, “For the pop audience, dangdut was hickish, erotic, not poetic, and too explicit. So we had to purify dangdut of its earlier associations” (Camelia Malik, as quoted in Weintraub 2010: 160).

Dangdut was born in marginalized urban neighbors. Planet Senin, the neighborhood of Jakarta associated with dangdut, began, according to Weintraub, as a junkyard populated by the homeless. Even early dangdut musicians discuss the birth of dangdut in terms of poverty and lack of infrastructure. Weintraub quotes singer Meggy Z:

It was considered a black place, a place without a master/without rules. When I went to Planet Senen, I often saw dead bodies on the side of the road. People who hung out there included the homeless, market sellers, contract laborers, prostitutes, criminals, gamblers, and artists. Every night musicians would gather on a small wooden stage to entertain. Anyone could come and play, and anyone could listen. There was a lot of inspiration there (Weintraub 2010: 84-85).

From these regions, dangdut spread out among the underprivileged until it was popularized by Rhoma Irama, whose mixture of dangdut with rock ‘n’ roll and status as a Haji (Muslim who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca) served to legitimize it somewhat in the eyes of the middle class.

In the 1970s, dangdut was associated with streets and food stalls, while rock and pop, more often played in nightclubs and bars, was linked to the middle and ruling classes. Within cities like Jakarta, Surabaya, and Semarang, dangdut was considered

kampung, “countrified,” connected dangdut to *kampung*, rural, poor areas lacking in infrastructure, while rock and pop were called “gedungan,” which translates as “associated with buildings,” but means urban, suggesting the associations of large concrete structures with certain genres of music and not with others. According to Weintraub, fans of rock and pop belonged to upper classes and were seen as “connected” on a global scale (2010: 107).

This concept of connection also exists on a local scale, because dangdut came to be associated with locations lacking infrastructural connection. Infrastructures are the technical and material networks which provide the foundation for living within societies, including water and waste systems, electrical grids, roads, and much more. Infrastructure facilitates flow and connection. Because infrastructures are frequently produced by states, they reveal state priorities. As Hannah Apel, Nikhil Anand, and Akhil Gupta write, “the material and political lives of infrastructure reveal fragile relations between people, things, and the institutions (both public and private) that seek to govern them” (Apel et al 2015). As a result, they write that observing the locations, functions, and intended uses of infrastructure is a productive way to read political and social interactions and assumptions. The spatial distinctions Weintraub describes, dangdut from rock and pop, match the distinctions Karen Bakker makes between areas of Jakarta that were connected to water infrastructure and the *kampung* – which was not, revealing a relationship between dangdut and locations of material, infrastructural disconnection and state abandonment. Consumers of dangdut maintained a tenuous citizenship in the Indonesian nation-state by virtue of this lack of connection, and dangdut came to symbolize that lack.

As is clear from above, dangdut both coded and was coded by location. It also, perhaps most explicitly, was coded by gender and sexuality. The terms for erotic female singing and dancing on Java for money have been well established through *tayuban*, *runggèng*, *lènggèr*, and *talèdhèk* traditions. René Lysloff describes a *lènggèr* performance as “a boisterous affair, drawing a large audience of mostly men and lasting through the entire night [...] in front, two or more young women dance provocatively, swaying their hips in close cadence to the complex patterns of the drums and gazing fixedly over the heads of hooting and cheering young men” (Lysloff 2001: 3). Though when dangdut began its gender connotations lay more with Rhoma Irama’s rock ‘n’ roll performance of masculinity, live dangdut performances today look very much like what Lysloff describes. Jeremy Wallach writes, “Dangdut music [...] erases social boundaries and attempts to create a utopian community in which identity is reduced to the inclusive ideological category of “Indonesianness,” with gender as the sole remaining divide” (Wallach 2008: 253). I disagree that dangdut presents a unified vision of Indonesianness; dangdut, viewed in all its iterations, expresses and reflects numerous hierarchies and divisions,⁴ but Wallach correctly points out that dangdut’s most obvious hierarchy lies in genre expectations towards women’s bodies. Dangdut is intimately caught up with issues of gender and sexuality, which in turn are intimately tied to concepts of class and space in Indonesian society. Dangdut is notorious for what Timothy Daniels calls the “foregrounding of sex, with the female body as spectacle” (Daniels 2013: 166). Women

⁴ Dangdut previous to 1998, before the fall of the Suharto regime and the development of a robust middle class, did present a more unified notion of Indonesianness, though a utopia which systematically disenfranchises half the population can hardly be unified and inclusive.

rarely attend the outdoor dangdut concerts, like the ones where Irma Bule performed, because they fear for both their safety and their reputation. As a result, women turn to mediated forms of dangdut to participate both as fans and performers.

It is certainly true that, for many of dangdut's iterations throughout place and history, the consumption of the dancing bodies of women and young girls has been a genre expectation. Yet accounts that call dangdut performance inherently degrading and exploitative overlook the great variety of dangdut styles and contexts. Each iteration of dangdut reinforces and challenges gender ideologies in different ways. Dangdut sung at parties differs vastly from dangdut at large festivals, at political rallies, on television, or in dangdut clubs. Space and place are key indicators coding whether a certain kind of dangdut performance will ruin or make reputations. In particular, public space and transportation infrastructure are associated with risk and sexual availability for dangdut musicians and consumers. One singer I interviewed in Malang, East Java, in the summer of 2015, who had a successful career as a party and karaoke dangdut singer with her husband playing synthesizer, responded with uncharacteristically unveiled horror when asked if she had ever been to the dangdut club by the train tracks: "Never. I never have, and never will" (Personal interview, Malang Indonesia 2015).

Mass media, another kind of infrastructure, requiring extensive sophisticated technologies and inter-regional cooperation, further influences dangdut's landscape. The same women who sing karaoke at parties or family karaoke parlors can listen to the music not only over the television, which is highly censored, but online through YouTube, Sound Cloud, or file sharing. Men participate in mediated listening as well, but

women dominate the online conversations, while men are still imagined to be the primary audience because their presence at outdoor dangdut concerts is so much more visible.

Andrew Weintraub acknowledges this, writing,

In public performances, males are the main audience. Yet [...] composers consistently reminded me that they compose with women audiences in mind [...] at home, where dangdut is broadcast on radio and television, and played on inexpensive video compact discs (VCD), dangdut's audience is primarily women (Weintraub 2010: 23).

He also notes how the television station Indonesian Educational Television (Televisi Pendidikan Indonesia, or TPI) is nicknamed "Televisi Pembantu Indonesia" (Indonesian Domestic Workers' Television) because of the station's female domestic worker fan base who vote for their favorite dangdut singers through cell phone text messages (2010: 3).

Today, venues for women fandoms have expanded online. Fans also follow their favorite musicians on Instagram or Twitter and interact with them. The results of these media technologies for dangdut have uneven gender and class results, making dangdut more widely available to those who can afford to purchase technology, but also resulting in less heavily sexualized dangdut gaining more prestigious support from music studios and television stations, since women are the majority of consumers in such contexts. As Brian Larkin eloquently argues,

Media technologies are more than transmitters of content, they represent cultural ambitions, political machineries, modes of leisure, relations between technology and the body, and, in certain ways, the economy and

spirit of an age. Yet at the same time, media such as television, cassettes, and cinema provide the infrastructure to facilitate and direct transnational flows of cultural goods and the modes of affect, desire, fantasy, and devotion these goods provoke. They create technical and institutional arrangements, each directing what sort of media (Islamic preaching, sporting events, Indian films, Hollywood) will travel and what the arrangements of their exhibition and reception will be. In this way, media create unique aural and perceptual environments, everyday urban arenas through which people move, work, and become bored, violent, amorous, or contemplative (Larkin 2008: 2-3).

The division in consumption of dangdut, men in public space, women in mediated private space, results in gendered mediation, with women forming the dominant consumers of dangdut on television. This results in further class implications; as dangdut on television becomes less sexual and more glamorous and elegant, success as performers becomes a more distant dream for women of lower socio-economic class, who must increasingly sensationalize their performances to make a profit on the outdoor concert circuit, further distancing themselves from economic security. This contrast led me to investigate the under-discussed realm of dangdut targeted at women and produced with mediated venues, like online or on television, in mind.

At the same time, media technologies heighten the danger of scandal for dangdut musicians because they blur the divide between public and private space. In Andrew Weintraub's analysis of the infamous dangdut song "*Gadis atau Janda*," which was

deemed pornographic and banned by the Indonesian State Censor Board in the 1990s, he claims, “It is considered ‘porno’ because the song brazenly exposes a very public demonstration of this very private moment. It tests the limits of what is socially acceptable, and it confuses notions of public and private space” (Weintraub 2011: 329). Weintraub leaves this pronouncement, a rather remarkable claim, uninvestigated. In effect, he argues that “porno” is defined by place and space. I argue that place and space help to define how dangdut musicians perform gender and sexuality. In addition, I contend that media technologies, themselves a form of infrastructure, alter the kinds of sexual and gender expression that are considered pornographic, explicit, or dangerous, because these infrastructures transgress divisions between public and private space, adding a further level of complication in the steps dangdut performers have to perform.

The record company Nagaswara was established in 1999 in Jakarta, focusing on producing karaoke songs, house music, and remixes. In the early 2000s it was known as Indonesia's # 1 Dance Label. Nagaswara began producing dangdut, according to its official website, when dangdut became more electronically-oriented in the early 2000s. However, as Nagaswara attempts to appeal to a wider market, it has turned away from EDM in favor of Indonesian pop and rock groups. Their dangdut artists range from EDM-based sound that lacks any semblance of traditional dangdut instruments like *gendang*, the drum, and *suling*, or flute, to songs which deliberately highlight more “traditional” dangdut sound and instruments. I chose to focus on three Nagaswara artists partly because of the dearth of research on dangdut that targets women and higher classes and partly because Nagaswara artists were in the spotlight as I began my research. Each

woman presents a unique face, both through the studio and outside of its confines, but every aspect of identity presented serves to perform gender norms and the norms of dangdut stardom.

Though all three women work through Nagaswara, each performs gender in contrasting ways through different supplementary media technologies. For the remainder of this discussion, I examine how media, especially music videos on television and YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, are used by dangdut singers to create gendered identities. I also look at how these media technologies sometimes work to their disadvantage. Further, I explore how media technologies are not simply digital, disembodied realms, but liminal frontiers that transgress boundaries between the private and the public, resulting in spatialized gender implications within the media themselves. Devy Berlian, promoted as a dangdut singer who blends her style with hip-hop, performs different gender personas in her music videos themselves, using urban space and public infrastructure to evoke modernity, hip-hop subculture, and female sexuality. Fitri Carlina, on the other hand, uses her Instagram account to counter the narratives of her music videos, attempting to connect to fans through images of her “real life,” separate from glamour and sexuality. She does this by sharing intimate moments of domestic and religious spaces in her photographs. Zaskia Gotik, in contrast, fell victim to media infrastructure’s ability to project identity when television and online media broadcast a faux pas which led to subsequent attacks on her intelligence, religious devotion, and national loyalty. The online attacks were so severe, she shut down her social media for

more than a month. In all three cases, media technologies enable projections of nuanced gender identity. They also all risk involuntary inscription of identity.

Gendered Bodies, Public Space, and Modernity in Devy Berlian's Music Videos

My first case study focuses on music videos as a location of gendered performance, a site where gender and music intersect with media infrastructure and modernity. Modernizing projects are never neutral. It is, after all, no coincidence that dangdut's history covers the same years as the modernizing projects of the Suharto government; Made Supriatma, quoted earlier, points to the New Order government, headed by President Suharto from 1967 to 1998, coopting dangdut's popularity for political purposes, utilizing it to whip crowds into frenzies at campaign events, leading to the fierce competition that drove Bule to dance with snakes.

The political goals of the New Order inscribed themselves on the environment as well through infrastructure projects. Infrastructure projects can be studied as a form of *technopolitics*, as they are built with intended bodies and intended uses in mind. Implicit assumptions are built into the very materials and designs of infrastructure. For example, in *Privatizing Water*, Karen Bakker describes how multiple governments deliberately maintained inequality in Jakarta's water infrastructure. Similarly, Rudolf Mrázek explains Dutch colonializer's shock and discomfort at "natives" utilizing railways and roads more than the Dutch thought they ought to (Mrázek 2002). But *technopolitics* is not the only way to study infrastructure. Infrastructure accumulates semiotic meanings beyond its materials. As Brian Larkin points out, infrastructures "emerge out of and store

within them forms of desire and fantasy and can take on fetish-like aspects that sometimes can be wholly autonomous from their technical function” (Larkin 2013: 329).

Just as infrastructure and technology are disputed concepts and materials, enacting human *technopolitics* and being imbued with semiotic meanings, so are women’s bodies, which are, to quote Carla Jones, “a significant site for the contest over the terms of modernity in contemporary Indonesia [...], particularly through their dress and manners” (Jones 2003: 185). The relationship of women’s bodies to infrastructure displayed in popular culture reveals a gendered component to “infrastructural violence,” as bodies transgress their assumed relationships to infrastructure. In a special issue of *Ethnography*, Dennis Rodgers and Bruce O’Neill write that infrastructure “demarcates both literally and figuratively which points in urban contexts can and should be connected, and which should not, the kinds of people and good that can and should circulate easily, and which should stay put, and who can and should be integrated within the city, and who should be left outside of it” (Rodgers and O’Neill 2012: 402). Many types of unwanted bodies, bodies marked by race, ethnicity, gender expression, and socio-economic class, are excluded, both deliberately and accidentally, from the infrastructure through *technopolitics*. Women’s bodies also make a particularly compelling case study of the semiotic meanings of infrastructure, as their assumed use of infrastructure relates to issues of space, prestige, and labor. Women’s infrastructure is the indoor labor of cleaning, bathing, and disposing, while “spectacular infrastructure,” to borrow Christina Schwenkel’s phrase (2015), or highly visible infrastructure associated with modernizing projects, is mapped onto male bodies. Who else could dominate the

landscape and demonstrate such power? Dams, roads, bridges, etc., are associated with virility and often come with their own male designers, daring pioneers and creative geniuses.

Dangdut music videos provide a text for reading the relationships between women's bodies and infrastructure in Indonesia, both of which are associated with modernizing projects. Because of dangdut's associations with unrestrained sexuality, women musicians walk a careful line between seeming too sexual, and as a result being labeled "porno" and banned, or failing to satisfy genre expectations, which demand an element of sexuality. These women simultaneously attempt to portray a single ideal Indonesian femininity and fracture their identities into many archetypes—sexual plaything, obedient wife, pious Muslim—to achieve the appearance of that ideal. One way dangdut musicians transmit their identity is through their music videos, as the behaviors of performance tell us a great deal about gender expectations.

In my review of dangdut music videos released by Nagaswara during the 2013-2016 period, I came upon one song with two music videos. Both versions of the song "*Pemberi Harapan Palsu*," or "Giver of False Hopes," are sung by Devy Berlian, and both were released in the year 2015. The lyrics are identical, the musical structure nearly so, but the visuals of the two music videos strongly contrast.

In the [first music video](#),⁵ from February 2015, Devy stands in a dark studio, brightly lit, her hair curled, nails covered with glitter, wearing a long pink dress. Her eyes

⁵ Throughout the text I have inserted hyperlinks to the YouTube versions of the music videos referenced. While I recognize that YouTube links are not stable or permanent, and that the music

are downcast or looking towards a man we never see clearly. Glitter meant to look like tears dots her cheeks. She protests,

You're a giver of false hopes

Please go far from me

You're a giver of false hopes

Step off, man, step off, I don't want you.⁶

The camera shoots very close to her face; rarely do we see any part of her below her shoulders. The first half of the video is in somber black and white, the second half overwhelmed by pink. Both sets are clearly interiors, a simple studio in soft focus, bright bulbs lighting Devy from behind and obscuring the set. She stands near pink cloth flowers, which sometimes hide her downcast, heavily made-up eyes. The music, played on synthesizer and *gendang*, a small pair of drums, sounds like standard EDM-influenced dangdut, utilizing dangdut rhythms like the emphasis on beats one and four. When Devy dances, which only occurs during an interlude between the chorus and a return to the verse, she sways her shoulders and hips back and forth in a manner that seems mildly suggestive, but not overtly sexual. The camera focuses on the subtle movements of her hands as they rotate, palms up and then palms down, as her shoulders shimmy gently up and down. A camera affect makes her appear doubled and mirrored, two Devy Berlans

videos are cited in the bibliography, I have proceeded in this way because of the importance of music videos to my argument and the convenience of this method for the reader.

⁶ *Kau pemberi harapan palsu
plis dong pergi menjauh dariku
kau pemberi harapan palsu
minggir dong minggir aku tak mau*

emerging from a center point, so at times she shrinks into nothing more than a pair of mirrored arms. Her steps are restrained to the view of a single camera's medium shot, and we never see her full body dancing. Though her words express anger and resistance, her downcast eyes and subdued movements indicate mourning, shame, and submission.

The [second video](#), release in October of 2015, is called the "Remix version." The video description on YouTube calls the music "TRAPDUT STYLE," dangdut blended with "western music" (music barat) like EDM, Trap, and Hip-Hop. The musical difference is readily apparent, favoring hip-hop rhythms over dangdut ones, and every aspect of the music synthesized. The rhythm of the *gendang* is nowhere to be found, replaced with snaps on beats two and four. The opening shots show Jakarta landmarks, including public transportation and large, perfectly clean and empty roads and bridges, a vision of urban modernity in a city that in reality is known for uneven infrastructure and terrible traffic. Devy herself is hardly recognizable. Wearing large hoop earrings, a baseball cap, a "Golden State of Mind" t-shirt (in English), tight black Nike shorts, and sheer tights that stretch to just above her knees, leaving most of her thigh exposed, Devy stands on rooftops and bridges and in front of street art and fountains. She stares directly into the camera, straight at her audience, rather than hiding behind a man's shoulder or a wall of pink flowers, the aggression in her words now fully expressed. She is surrounded by similarly scantily clad backup dancers and shirtless, dread-locked men wearing all black. When she dances, she turns around and bends over, twerking, standing with her legs far apart and shaking and slapping her butt. She grinds against stone walls and chain-link fences.

In the *trapdut* remix of “*Pemberi Harapan Palsu*,” images of infrastructure, the roads, bridges, fountains, and public transportation, code more than what is proper in public and private space. Remixing dangdut with “western music,” Devy’s body in space is changed accordingly. In particular, the use of trap and hip-hop in the remix is echoed in the images, from the fashion to the use of urban infrastructure landscapes. Brent Luvaas describes these kinds of remixes and genre play as attempts to connect to a global scale. Speaking of indie musicians, he writes, “they work to demonstrate their own hard-earned cosmopolitanism as testimony to their own global relevance, their taste and style as markedly different from some colossal, but perpetually vague, Indonesian Other” (Luvaas 2012: 133-134). In the remix of “*Pemberi Harapan Palsu*,” the use of hip-hop and trap musical and visual aesthetics enacts connection and modernity. Infrastructure here is part of that project, associated with “western-ness,” urbanness, and modernity. It is also associated with sexual availability, as Devy and her backup dancers make clear, twerking on bridges and near fountains. In some ways Devy Berlian transgresses the intent of infrastructure—not only that she’s dancing on it. She transgresses its gendered associations with masculinity and power, and yet she reifies the modern goals of infrastructure as spectacle, adding the spectacle of her body for consumption.

Infrastructure, public space, and technology are coded in gendered associations in dangdut music videos. Spectacular infrastructure and public space are associated with masculinity and sexually available women’s bodies, while interiors are associated with the properly chaste and shy Indonesian woman, who is still an erotic figure, but within middle-class Indonesian ideals rather than the explicitly sexual demands of live dangdut.

Devy Berlian, who began her musical career with the K-pop influenced girl band 5 Bidadari, or “5 Angels,” performs each role with vigor and conviction. Where she sees herself in relation to the characters she plays is unclear, but her acceptance of these seemingly dichotomous personas, in addition to her skill as a dancer and singer, has served her career well.

So far I have echoed claims that infrastructural projects are not neutral, but built with assumed bodies, uses, and exclusions in mind. These assumptions are often gendered, enacting assumptions about the nature of women’s bodies in relation to public space and public infrastructure. I have argued that dangdut music videos are fertile ground for analyzing the interaction between popular music and media, concepts of gendered behavior, and modernizing projects as symbolized by spectacular images of pristine roads, bridges, and fountains. I have also shown how Devy Berlian performs the intersections between public space, music, and gender. Next, I will turn away from built conceptions of gender and towards the ways another dangdut musicians performs gender on social media.

Media Technologies as Liminal Space: Dangdut and Instagram

On February 2nd, 2016, Fitri Carlina instagrams from Medina, where she is on pilgrimage with her husband. Bound to a wheelchair by an ankle injury, she still finds time between rituals to Instagram a photo with her husband, thanking him for his patience and love. An earlier Instagram, this one in Mecca, in front of the *kaaba*, shows Fitri with her husband, dressed in all white, including a veil, without any makeup. She smiles

lightly at the camera. Her husband looks thoughtful and content. All around them, the glaring lights, glass walls, and city skyline of Meca stand in contrast with their simple white clothing. In her post, she praises Allah.

Figure 2: Fitri Carlina with her husband in front of the kaaba. Printed with permission from Fitri Carlina.



On March 7th, 2016, Fitri Carlina, a devoted wife, ankle healed, visits a fertility clinic with her husband. Dressed in a purple hospital gown, she lies on a hospital bed, her husband anxiously touching her shoulder. An earnest-looking doctor with a pink tie holds an ultrasound wand over her pelvis. Fitri smiles nervously at the ultrasound screen. Someone snaps a photo of the moment, and Fitri instagrams it, saying she prays the program helps her to become pregnant.



Figure 3: Fitri Carlina and husband at a Singapore fertility clinic. Reprinted with permission from Fitri Carlina.

On January 15th, 2016, Fitri Carlina instagrams a promotional post for her latest single and music video, titled “Jimmy.” Dressed in tight black leather, she stares defiantly at the camera, flanked on either side by backup dancers dressed likewise in skimpy, edgy black clothing. She stands in a studio designed to evoke urban space through its brick walls and concrete floor. Her persona is sophisticated, sensual, that of a dangdut star who can command a stage and a crowd of fans.



Figure 4: Instagram from the production set for the music video for "Jimmy." Reprinted with permission from Fitri Carlina.

Karen Strassler writes that in the early years after colonialism, popular photography in Java was formative in shaping the Indonesian nation. Photography participated in the work of “making of modern, national subjects” and “generating new spatial and temporal orientations” (Strassler 2010: xv, see also Mrázek 2002). While personal photographs are personally meaningful, Strassler argues they often derive their meaning from outside imaginings. She writes, “popular photographs entangle intimate and idiosyncratic projects of love, selfhood, and memory with more public, collective imaginings and yearnings” (Strassler 2010: xv). “As photography becomes more

widespread as both a personal and a public form of representational practice, images become increasingly central to the ways individuals and collectivities imagine and recognize themselves” (Strassler 2010: 3). According to Strassler, photography has this ability because of its power to make the private public and the public private. She writes,

Beyond giving visual form to narrative imaginings, photography’s political significance lies in the technology’s traversal of intimate and public domains. Images that circulate via mass media like television, film, and commercial print-images penetrate into the rhythms and intimate space of everyday life, providing imaginative resources with which people fashion their identities. But what distinguishes photography from these other visual media is its openness to popular practice and its explicit use as a medium of personal affiliation, identity, and memory. For it is not only as consumers of images but as producers and subjects of them that people become participants in the envisioning of the nation (Strassler 2010: 4).

Fitri Carlina uses this photographic power in her Instagram account. In personal comments to me on May 13th, 2016, Carlina admitted she preferred sharing photos on Instagram to sharing her writing, because her fans could see her activities. Instagram, founded in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, is a mobile online photo-sharing and social networking application. Part of its appeal comes from a series of pre-set filters users can apply to photographs to achieve a particular style or mood. The application skews towards young women, with 90% of users under 35 years old and 68% female (Smith et al 2014). Though it is difficult to acquire user data by nation from companies

like Instagram, even a casual observer can see that Instagram use by Indonesians keeps pace with users of similar age, class, and gender in the U.S. Indonesians use Instagram to share their photographs, to sell goods, to run their businesses, and, like Carlina, to connect with fans.

Apart from her Instagram account, Fitri Carlina communicates to fans primarily through her music and music videos. The Fitri Carlina of dangdut music videos dresses in black and a cowboy hat and is accompanied by screaming guitars. While Devy Berlian's Nagaswara persona is associated with ideas of diasporic urban blackness, her music blended with hip hop and R&B, Fitri Carlina plays a rockstar. In the [music video for her biggest hit to date](#), called "*ABG Tua*," or "Old Teenager,"⁷ Fitri Carlina dances in black leather shorts, a studded leather jacket, a cowboy hat, and knee-high black boots, thick jewelry in the shape of skulls decorating her fingers. Carlina uses aspects of her identity aside from gender as cultural capital within the music video. It opens with the sound of wailing electric guitars, but halfway through the first verse, we both see and hear the *gendang* and the *suling* (flute) that once defined dangdut sound, but have been largely absent from EDM-based dangdut. Carlina's dancing changes corresponding to the dominant instruments, jumping up and down during the guitar solo but performing in the style of more traditional Banyuwangi Javanese dance during the *suling* solo. In this way Carlina also projects her regional identity. Another moment of musical contestation occurs during choruses when Fitri Carlina hears a certain drum beat and vigorously

⁷ "ABG" stand for "*anak baru gaul*" or "*anak baru gede*," which means literally "newly social kid," "newly large kid," or adolescent.

thrusts her hips a full two feet towards a crowd of young men in response. The beat and accompanying dance move are elements from dangdut *koplo*, a genre of dangdut regional to East Java, where Fitri Carlina was born. Throughout, her posture exudes power, her movements large and quick, she throws her arms in the air, directs her fists at the audience, and stands with her legs far apart, taking up space.

“*ABG Tua*,” in the age-old tradition of dangdut, teaches an explicit moral message: older men need to care for their families and be responsible, not chase after beautiful young women. This narrative, explicated in the lyrics and the plot of the video, is complicated by the consumption of women’s bodies presented in the images, wherein Fitri Carlina’s dancing body is foregrounded. “*ABG Tua*” utilizes humor with its moral message in another attempt to appeal to young Indonesians; the young people, mostly men but also women, dancing at the club with Fitri Carlina are contrasted to the character of the older man, perhaps in order to make fun of dangdut’s aging fan base and their fantasies of consumption of women’s bodies. Carlina’s body, the video argues, is for young men, a visual representation of the rakyat, and for herself.

But this projection of Fitri Carlina bears little resemblance to the woman she renders on Instagram, a woman who loves to travel, especially to Bali and Japan, who is devoted to her husband and her religion, who wants a child and is open about her battles with infertility. Carlina writes, “Only rarely do I post sexy photos on Instagram. On Instagram I want to show the real life behind the glamorous world of entertainment, because my fans want to know about how I really live” (personal comments, May 13th

2016).⁸ She appears to be correct; most pictures she posts of Instagram garner more than three thousand likes, compared to Zaskia Gotik, who until recently was a more popular artist but whose Instagram account focuses on the glamour of performances and events. Carlina has more control over her Instagram image than the persona mediated by Nagaswara in songs and music videos. She does not write her own songs, and she plans her music videos collaboratively with a team from the studio. Yet she does not speak of the music videos as placing upon her any requirement to present herself as more sexual than she is comfortable. Indeed, she argues that the style of dance in her music videos is refined. She writes, “This dance isn’t the sexy or erotic type of dancing that has been seen as integral to dangdut, but elegant dance that adjusts to the rhythm of the music. Because of this, to sing dangdut you definitely need inspiration and taste” (personal comments, May 13th, 2016).

At the same time, Carlina acknowledges the differences between the personas she presents and has had to present. Alongside her gratitude towards God, Carlina soberly reflects on the precarity of her situation:

It’s true, there will always be ups and downs. What was most difficult for me was trying to struggle out of the village to be known in the capital city. In the past, I’ve had to sing in very remote villages, and I was paid by the committee only 25.000 rupiah (about \$2.10 US dollars at current exchange rates). Now my biggest challenge is competition with other dangdut singers.

⁸ “Jarang sekali saya post seksi di Instagram. Di Instagram saya ingin menunjukkan kehidupan asli saya dibalik glamour dunia hiburan. Karena fans saya ingin mengetahui bagaimana kehidupan saya sebenarnya.”

But what's most important is to protect my existence through always distributing new work (personal communication, May 13th, 2016).⁹

In the fiercely competitive dangdut industry, Fitri Carlina uses Instagram to add a layer of disclosure to her public identity not present in her music videos. By using Instagram to transgress the boundaries between public and private, and by presenting a private life in line with the ideals of her young women fans, Carlina capitalizes on gender performance to maintain a career in the face of economic volatility.

Failing to Perform Gender: Zaskia Gotik, *Malu*, and Disconnection

My final case study centers on a dangdut musician who, rather than successfully leveraging social media, is struggling against it. Zaskia Gotik has been the focal point of controversy in dangdut in Indonesia beginning March 2016, outpacing public focus on Irma Bule by a wide margin. When the singer responded on an entertainment TV show, *Dahsyat*, that the fifth symbol of Pancasila, Indonesia's state ideology, was a twerking duck¹⁰, rather than a rice padi and cotton plant, recorded footage of the event went viral, prompting outrage and legal action. "She just wanted to make people laugh," said her lawyer Edi Harwanto (Almanar).

⁹ *Ya pasti ada suka dan duka nya yaaa... Yang paling sulit menurut saya adalah saat saya berjuang dari Desa untuk bisa dikenal di Ibukota. Pernah suatu saat saya harus menyanyi di sebuah desa yang sangat terpencil, dan fee untuk saya pun di hutang oleh Panitia padahal cm 25.000 rupiah. Kalau sekarang yang sulit ya masalah persaingan dengan penyanyi dangdut yang lain. Tapi yang terpenting adalah terus menjaga eksistensi dengan selalu mengeluarkan karya*

¹⁰ The Jakarta Globe translates Gotik's phrase "bebek nungging" as "twerking duck," while Jakarta Coconuts, an online celebrity news source, translates the same phrase as "a duck that's bending over." See Almanar 2016" and "Dangdut singer Zaskia may face criminal sanctions" in the bibliography.

Indonesian law forbids citizens from disparaging the national flag, state symbols, national anthem, and national language. Gotik's response drew an outcry from Indonesians, and she quickly apologized. That did not prevent the opening of an official inquiry and multiple interrogations. Gotik faces up to five years in prison and a fine of 500 million rupiah (about \$37,500 US dollars at time of writing).

Zaskia Gotik is one of Nagaswara's most popular artists. Her [recent music video](#) "[Bang Jono – Remix](#)" has garnered nearly twenty million views on YouTube. In that video, she plays two roles. One character, dressed elegantly in rich pink batik and lace, sings and dances, her attention on the camera. The other character, dressed more simply in a short red dress, enacts the drama of the song. She tries to sweep under her husband's feet as he plays video games, frustrated that he never works and acts like a baby. She sings,

You used to promise to bring me diamonds

However, now I'm not even sure I'll eat every day.

You say this, you say that

I'm bored with your reasons

Do you think I can just eat rocks to live?

Do you think your child does not need milk?¹¹

¹¹ *Dulu kau janji bawa berlian untukku
Sehari makan sekalipun tak tentu
Kau bilang inilah kau bilang itulah
Bosan dengan alasanmu
Kau fikir hidup ini cuma makan batu
Kau fikir anakmu tak butuh susu*

The music video is a stereotypical representation of domestic femininity. The selfless, hard-working woman slaves to keep a neat home and complains that her husband only plays videogames and does not contribute. At the same time, the music video shows a level of conspicuous consumption not attainable for many fans; the videogame console, bright lights, sofa, and even the stroller the baby representing her husband sit in show the ideals and struggles of urban, modern home life.

Zaskia Gotik, like many dangdut artists, became famous for her particular style of dancing, bending over and shaking her hips at the audience with small, rapid movements. She calls her style “*goyang itik*,” or “rocking duck.” Her stage name, Gotik, comes from a combination of those words. When Zaskia joked about the twerking duck, she was likely trying to make a self-referential joke. The Indonesian public did not see the joke in the same light, and quickly took to Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to voice their displeasure. For a month, Zaskia Gotik shut down her Twitter account, while internet memes proliferated. In response to her appearance at her interrogation, one meme asked, “Why wear the veil only when you’re faced with a problem with the police? Do you think criminals need to wear veils?” The image juxtaposes Gotik’s appearance in a veil with her clothing in dangdut performances, accusing her of hypocrisy. While an observer might find this confusing when compared with Fitri Carlina’s use of the veil, context plays a large role in determining whether identity performance is seen as hypocritical or appropriately moral. Carlina used the veil primarily while on pilgrimage, while Gotik used it to try to demonstrate modesty and humility while facing police. A Muslim woman must wear a veil in Mecca, a sacred place and private moment, though Carlina

transgresses that privacy through Instagram. Gotik wore the veil at a police investigation, a likewise private moment, but because the space was one of justice, not piety, and because the image was controlled by online media sources, not Gotik herself, the attempt to display modesty, piety, and respect failed. Carlina's use of the veil was seen as appropriate, Gotik's as manipulative.



Figure 5: Internet meme questioning Gotik's use of the veil. Author unknown.

The discourse that emerged was overwhelmingly negative. Writers and posters described how Gotik despised and scorned Indonesia, and told her to go live somewhere

else. Even those who were more supportive did not deny she'd done something wrong. Others offered more support. But Zaskia Gotik's Twitter and Instagram shut down for nearly six weeks. Sharyn Graham Davies argues that in Indonesia shame, or *malu*, is a formidable instrument for shaping sexual practices. She writes, "within parts of Indonesia, the possibility of evoking shame is so powerful that no further threats need to be made to ensure people curtail undesirable behavior [...] shame is visited on and through the bodies of women far more than men" (Bennett and Davies 2014: 32-33). According to Henry Spiller's discussion of Sundanese men's dancing (2010), *malu* must sometimes be publically expressed in order to mitigate the wrongs committed, and it is associated with bodily choreography: attempting to appear small, casting the gaze downward, shuffling the feet. How can the choreography of *malu* be performed when both the shameful act the the responses to it are performed through media technology? Right before she stopped posting, Gotik instagrammed this image:



Figure 6: Instagram image of an abandoned beach by Zaskia Gotik.

The abandoned beach, sand decorated with driftwood, stands in stark contrast to her usual posts, mainly of herself in formal dresses in dressing rooms, airplanes, and on stages. Gone is her body, her clothing, and the settings that so often framed them; yet the impulse remained to take this most private moment and use media technologies to broadcast it. Why did she post it? Was it a symbol of *malu*? Of sadness? Of escape? Abandonment? Whatever the reason, this image's symbolic disconnection demonstrates on one hand the power of images of infrastructure as a framing narrative. Its lack here shows humility, melancholy, escape, a drastic change from Gotik's usual presentation of identity. However, even in the midst of a scandal, Gotik trusts media infrastructure,

represented by Instagram, to connect to fans that sympathize and to publically perform *malu*. Whether her trust is justified remains to be seen.

Conclusions

Irma Bule danced to make money and to stay competitive, perhaps dreaming of some future day when she, like Devy Berlian, Fitri Carlina, and Zaskia Gotik, would leave the village for a comfortable contract in Jakarta with Nagaswara. In addition to trading rural space for urban, dangdut musicians trade outdoor stages for indoor studios, live performances for television, YouTube, and Instagram, sensationalized sexuality for middle-class values. The sweating, dancing body becomes still, antiseptic, and pure. This transition requires adjustments to public image, and all three artists discussed here made use of media technologies to connect to the new fans who would determine their success. But media technologies are themselves an infrastructure inscribed with its own connotations. Though, like Fitri Carlina, dangdut musicians can attempt to show their true, down-to-earth lives on social media, by using Instagram they transgress the line between private and public, risking even greater scrutiny.

Each woman discussed here presents multiple identities through the studio and outside of its boundaries. Though all three are signed to Nagaswara, each performs gender in different ways through diverse media technologies, including music videos on television and YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Because media technologies like YouTube videos and Instagram photography show images, they possess the power to transgress boundaries between public and private space, reconstituting and reflecting

attitudes toward gendered bodies, pornography, sexuality, and proper gendered behavior. Devy Berlian, whose music videos demonstrate the connections between modernity, urban space, and women's bodies, Fitri Carlina, who uses her Instagram account to demonstrate humble domestic life to fans, and Zaskia Gotik, who chose to disconnect from media technology in the face of online backlash. In all three cases, media technologies allowed dangdut musicians to project a complex and nuanced gender identity necessary to maintain careers. However, media technologies also opened them to greater risk.

I have argued here that the music industry and the technologies used by it form a kind of media infrastructure that code gendered behaviors, much as Devy Berlian's dancing body was coded by the images of roads and bridges surrounding it. These media infrastructures constrain the bodies and identities of women dangdut musicians, by tying them to official systems of capital production and enacting choreographies of gender they must fulfill in order to succeed. But they also enable dangdut musicians to exceed and challenge gender identity and norms of appropriate behavior, and in turn challenge existing economic and political structures in Indonesia. While studios market and code gender identity, media technologies like YouTube allow artists to skirt anti-pornography laws in their music videos, and Instagram allows them to present an alternative face to their studio-mediated identity. In short, the choreographies of dangdut mediated by media

infrastructure are specific, but not intractable, open to individual performance and changing flows and connections.¹²

¹² In this text I have relied upon a reading of the actions of artists who try to reach women consumers as my method for understanding them. While in many ways revealing, this method has limitations and privileges producers of music over those who listen, and in future research I hope to reach women consumers of dangdut themselves. As Zaskia Gotik's case shows, those who listen possess great power, and in future research I hope to include their voices with more subtlety and strength

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