

ABSTRACT

The subculture of urban young people who are fans of global popular culture, according to the Birmingham School tradition, has been believed as opposition subculture to the hegemony of dominant power. However, this study found that the subculture being developed by the fans of the popular culture “The Mortal Instruments” in Indonesia contradicts the Neo-Gramscian thinking that becomes the theoretical framework of popular cultural studies. In building their identity, some members of the digital fandom of global popular culture are critical of the content of cultural texts as a form of opposition to the texts that the cultural industry produces. Yet, they are simply developing forms of pseudo opposition only performed within the system, which is in the fandom website. In the era of media convergence, urban young people as fans of global popular culture are “prosumers” acting not only as passive consumers who enjoy cultural texts intertextually, but also as active producers who create cultural texts, which are paratexts, a result of their creativity. This study found that the urban young people belonging to a digital fandom are not subjects that are completely free from the hegemony of capitalist ideology because they are play labour that are also free digital labour for the force of global culture industry. Critical attitudes of urban youth in building their subculture identity of digital fandom are unable to resist the system, but they are even inside the force network of capitalist culture industry –as what the Frankfurt School claims as the domination and superiority of the force of global entertainment industry which keeps restoring it self.

Key words: digital fandom subculture, the Mortal Instruments Indonesia, global popular culture, prosumer, free digital labour.