KIN-Pop and Indonesian Boy Bands: Transnational Flow of K-Pop*

Jungwon Kim

Contents

I. Introduction
II. Galaxy Superstar and the Birth of S4
III. S4’s Musical Features and Performance Styles
IV. KIN-Pop, Back and Forth Between Korea and Indonesia
    Toward New Asianism
V. Conclusion
Appendix
Bibliography
Abstract

* This paper is a revision of my unpublished research paper, which was presented at the 49th annual meeting for the Society for Ethnomusicology, Southern California and Hawaii Chapter in San Diego, California on March 1, 2015.
- Received by April 20, First Reviewed by May 4, Finally Accepted by June 1.
I. Introduction

Indonesia is one of the largest consumers of popular culture from South Korea (hereafter Korea). Since the Korean romantic drama, *Autumn in My Heart* (가을동화), was aired on Indosiar TV in 2002, Korean popular culture has spread across Indonesia — this is called the Korean wave, *hallyu* (한류), or *Gelombang Korea* in Indonesia. Indonesian interest in Korean pop culture, which started with the Korean drama, has recently developed into the young generation’s involvement with Korean popular music (hereafter K-pop). Many young Indonesian people listen to K-pop songs everyday via MP3 players, smartphones, computers or televisions, and also travel across Indonesia and other Asian countries in order to attend K-pop concert tours.

Enjoying K-pop, young Indonesians position themselves as performers even more than as listeners. They not only go to karaoke regularly to practice K-pop singing for fun1) but also cover K-pop and then share their covers with other fans.2) These Indonesian youths’ performances of K-pop have shifted toward the professional level through formal contests. For example, a national scale competition for Indonesian K-pop performers, titled *Galaxy Superstar* (갤럭시 슈퍼스타), was held around various regions of Indonesia in early 2012. Eleven finalists were invited to Korea

---

1) I presented a paper on Indonesian girls’ ways of enjoying K-pop on Facebook, entitled “Oppa, Saranghae: Indonesian Girls’ Listening to K-pop, Making a Relationship with Koreans, and Constructing Korea,” at the 3rd Inter-Asia Popular Music Studies Conference in July 2012. For this paper, I interviewed five Indonesian girls via online chats from March through April 2012. Talking about how they enjoyed K-pop in their daily lives, I learned their regular practices of K-pop singing.