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From canon to algorithm: The dynamics of Indonesian literature as world literature in the digital platform era

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Abstract: The rapid development of digital platforms has significantly transformed the production, circulation, and consumption of literary works, creating new possibilities for the position of Indonesian literature within world literature. Traditionally, the inclusion of literary works in global literary circulation has largely depended on translation, literary institutions, publishers, critics, and international cultural networks. However, the emergence of digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Wattpad, and YouTube has introduced new mechanisms through which literary visibility and legitimacy are produced. This article examines how digital platforms reshape the dynamics of Indonesian literature as world literature by shifting literary circulation from institution-centered mechanisms toward platform-driven and algorithmically mediated systems. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study integrates David Damrosch's concept of world literature with José van Dijck's theory of platform society and Henry Jenkins' notion of participatory culture. The findings indicate that digital platforms expand opportunities for literary mobility beyond national and linguistic boundaries while simultaneously transforming the processes through which literary value and visibility are established. Readers increasingly function not only as consumers but also as curators, promoters, interpreters, and distributors of literary content. Consequently, Indonesian literature's participation in world literature is no longer determined solely by translation and institutional recognition but also by the interactions among users, communities, platforms, and algorithms. This transformation introduces new forms of literary mobility and offers fresh perspectives for comparative literary studies in the digital era.

Keywords: *Indonesian literature, world literature, digital platforms, algorithms, literary legitimacy*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of world literature has become one of the most influential frameworks in contemporary literary studies. In an increasingly interconnected world, literary works are no longer confined to the national, linguistic, or cultural boundaries from which they originate. Instead, literary texts circulate through translation, publication, adaptation, academic discourse, and cultural exchange, reaching readers across diverse geographical and cultural contexts. Within this framework, literature acquires meanings beyond its original environment and participates in a broader global conversation.

David Damrosch (2003) argues that world literature should not be understood merely as a collection of canonical texts from various nations. Rather, world literature refers to a mode of circulation and reading in which literary works gain new lives when they travel beyond their culture of origin. This perspective shifts attention from the intrinsic qualities of literary texts toward the processes that enable their movement across linguistic and cultural borders. Translation, publication, literary festivals,

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academic institutions, and cultural networks have traditionally functioned as major mechanisms facilitating such circulation.

For decades, discussions concerning Indonesian literature within the framework of world literature have largely focused on translation, international publication, literary awards, and participation in global literary networks. Scholars frequently examine how Indonesian literary works gain international recognition through institutional channels, particularly through translation into major world languages. Such studies reveal that literary mobility is often influenced by unequal global literary structures in which certain languages, publishers, and cultural institutions possess greater power to determine which works become internationally visible.

Recent developments in digital technology, however, have fundamentally transformed these conditions. Digital platforms such as *Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, Wattpad*, and other social media environments have created alternative pathways through which literary works can circulate. Literary visibility is no longer exclusively dependent on publishers, critics, translators, or cultural institutions. Instead, digital users actively participate in producing, sharing, recommending, reviewing, and reinterpreting literary content. These activities generate new forms of literary circulation that operate alongside conventional institutional systems.

The emergence of platform culture has attracted increasing scholarly attention across disciplines. Van Dijck, Poell, and de Waal (2018) argue that contemporary societies have become platform societies in which social interactions are increasingly organized through digital infrastructures. Platforms do not merely facilitate communication; they actively shape visibility, participation, and information flows through algorithmic systems. Consequently, digital platforms influence not only what users encounter but also what becomes culturally significant.

Within literary contexts, this transformation raises important questions. If literary institutions once served as the primary gatekeepers of literary legitimacy, what happens when algorithms increasingly determine visibility? How do social media interactions influence literary circulation? In what ways do readers become active participants in constructing literary value? Most importantly, how does this transformation affect the position of Indonesian literature within world literature?

Previous studies on world literature have primarily emphasized translation, transnational circulation, and institutional mediation. Meanwhile, studies on digital literature often focus on technological innovation, online literary communities, or digital publishing practices. Relatively limited attention has been given to the intersection between world literature and platform culture, particularly regarding Indonesian literature. Therefore, this article seeks to bridge these discussions by examining how digital platforms reshape the mechanisms through which Indonesian literature participates in world literary circulation.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to conceptualize the transformation of literary legitimacy from canon-based institutional systems toward algorithmically mediated platform systems. Rather than viewing digital platforms merely as new channels of dissemination, this study argues that they constitute a new ecology of literary circulation that redefines relationships among authors, readers, institutions, and literary texts. Through this perspective, the article proposes the notion of a shift “from canon to algorithm” as a framework for understanding the changing dynamics of Indonesian literature in the digital age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

World Literature and Literary Circulation

The contemporary discussion of world literature is strongly influenced by David Damrosch's (2003) proposition that world literature should be understood as a mode of circulation rather than a fixed canon. Literary works become part of world literature when they move beyond their original cultural contexts and acquire new meanings through transnational reading practices. This perspective emphasizes mobility, translation, reception, and cultural transformation.

Damrosch's approach departs from earlier conceptions that viewed world literature primarily as a collection of universally recognized masterpieces. Instead, literary circulation becomes central. A text participates in world literature not because it belongs to a predetermined list but because it successfully enters new cultural systems and generates new interpretive possibilities.

This understanding is particularly relevant for literatures originating from regions often considered peripheral within global literary systems. The circulation of Indonesian literature, for example, depends not only on textual quality but also on the mechanisms that enable texts to travel internationally. Translation, publication networks, academic institutions, literary festivals, and cultural diplomacy have traditionally played significant roles in facilitating such movement.

Platform Society and Algorithmic Visibility

The transformation of literary circulation in the digital era can be examined through the concept of platform society proposed by van Dijck, Poell, and de Waal (2018). According to these scholars, digital platforms have become central infrastructures organizing social, economic, and cultural interactions. Platform systems operate through mechanisms such as datafication, commodification, and algorithmic selection.

Datafication refers to the conversion of social activities into quantifiable data. In literary contexts, reading, commenting, sharing, liking, and recommending literary content generate digital traces that can be processed by platform systems. Commodification involves transforming these interactions into economic value, while algorithmic selection determines which content receives greater visibility.

These processes significantly affect literary circulation. Whereas traditional literary institutions functioned as gatekeepers through editorial judgment and cultural authority, contemporary platforms increasingly rely on algorithmic systems to determine visibility. Literary works compete within attention economies where engagement metrics influence discoverability.

The role of algorithms in digital literary circulation can be further understood through Gillespie's (2014) discussion of algorithmic relevance and Bucher's (2018) analysis of algorithmic power. Algorithms do not simply organize the abundance of digital content; they also participate in determining which materials become visible and relevant to particular users, helping to make the world appear in certain ways rather than others (Bucher, 2018). As Beer (2009) suggests, algorithmic systems should be examined in relation to the power structures embedded within participatory web cultures. These perspectives indicate that the apparent openness of digital literary publication does not necessarily produce equal opportunities for literary visibility. Rather, literary circulation remains conditioned by the infrastructures and selection mechanisms through which digital content reaches its audiences.

Consequently, algorithmic systems function as new gatekeepers that coexist with traditional literary institutions. Literary visibility is shaped not only by aesthetic quality

or institutional recognition but also by platform logics that prioritize engagement, interaction, and user activity.

Participatory Culture and the Transformation of Readers

The concept of participatory culture developed by Jenkins (2006) provides another important perspective for understanding literary circulation in digital environments. Jenkins argues that contemporary media users are no longer passive consumers but active participants who contribute to the creation, distribution, and reinterpretation of content.

Within literary contexts, readers increasingly engage in activities that extend beyond reading. They create reviews, produce literary videos, share quotations, participate in online reading communities, translate excerpts, and recommend works to broader audiences. Such activities transform readers into cultural intermediaries who actively influence literary visibility.

The transformation of literary circulation also requires attention to the relationship between literary texts and their digital environments. Hayles (2008) provides a useful framework for understanding electronic literature in relation to its technological conditions and modes of textual experience. Meanwhile, Abidin (2018) examines how online visibility and practices of internet fame shape cultural recognition in digital environments. Read together with Jenkins's (2006) concept of participatory culture, these perspectives help explain how literary readers can become active intermediaries who circulate, interpret, and promote literary works. Nevertheless, the accumulation of online attention should not be equated automatically with literary value or enduring cultural recognition.

In conceptualizing the movement of literature in the digital age, it is crucial to establish an analytical distinction between cross-border digital visibility and transnational literary legitimacy. Drawing upon Damrosch's (2003) formulation, world literature requires not merely the physical or digital movement of a text across national borders, but a process of refraction—wherein a text engages with a new cultural context and acquires fresh interpretive vitality. A short poem or narrative snippet that achieves high engagement on Instagram or TikTok across different countries demonstrates global algorithmic reach and digital popularity. However, this viral mobility does not automatically equate to entry into world literature in the strict sense. Digital visibility often represents a form of ephemeral attention within platform economies, whereas world literature implies a sustained, critical, and institutionalized engagement with foreign reading publics. Therefore, platform circulation should be understood as a pre-institutional mechanism of potential mobility that may facilitate, but does not guarantee, a text's integration into transnational literary scholarship or canonical discourse.

This transformation challenges conventional distinctions between producers and consumers. Readers become curators, promoters, and interpreters who contribute to the circulation of literary works. Their activities are amplified through platform infrastructures that enable rapid dissemination across geographical and cultural boundaries.

As a result, literary circulation becomes increasingly decentralized. While traditional institutions remain influential, readers and digital communities now participate directly in shaping literary reputation and visibility. This development creates new opportunities for literary mobility while simultaneously embedding literary circulation within algorithmically structured environments.

Furthermore, Kirschenbaum (2012) highlights how digital humanities approaches validate digital cultural artifacts and online textual practices as legitimate subjects of academic inquiry. In this context, studying digital literary footprints, reader interactions, and platform dynamics is not merely an observation of technological trends, but a necessary methodological expansion for contemporary literary scholarship.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the transformation of Indonesian literary circulation within digital platform environments. The research is grounded in interpretive cultural analysis and focuses on understanding how digital platforms reshape literary mobility, visibility, and legitimacy within the framework of world literature.

The empirical corpus for this observation was gathered during a six-month monitoring period (October 2023 to March 2024), focusing on publicly accessible literary content across five major platforms: Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Wattpad, and YouTube. Selection criteria prioritized posts, videos, and serialized texts that exhibited significant reader engagement (e.g., high comment volume, shares, and user-generated adaptations) or explicitly engaged with transnational circulation (such as bilingual posts and cross-cultural reader discussions). A total of 150 digital literary units—comprising poetry readings, micro-fiction posts, book reviews (BookTok/Bookstagram), and Wattpad serials—were documented and analyzed using qualitative content analysis and digital textual analysis.

Data collection was conducted through structured observation and documentation of digital literary practices. Relevant examples of literary circulation, user participation, and platform-mediated visibility were identified and categorized according to their functions within literary ecosystems. Particular attention was given to practices demonstrating transnational circulation, participatory engagement, and algorithmic amplification.

The analysis integrates three theoretical perspectives. First, Damrosch's concept of world literature is used to examine literary mobility beyond national and linguistic boundaries. Second, van Dijck's concept of platform society is employed to analyze the influence of digital infrastructures, datafication, and algorithmic selection on literary visibility. Third, Jenkins' notion of participatory culture is utilized to explain the changing role of readers as active participants in literary circulation.

To strengthen the analysis, the three theoretical perspectives were read in relation to the same digital literary phenomena, allowing convergences and differences in interpretation to be identified. This combined reading provides a more comprehensive understanding of the changing dynamics of Indonesian literature within digital platform ecosystems.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis shows that digital platforms have produced a significant transformation in the circulation of Indonesian literature. This transformation does not mean that conventional literary institutions, publishers, critics, translators, and canonical mechanisms have disappeared. Rather, they now operate alongside platform-based mechanisms that enable readers and digital communities to participate directly in the production of literary visibility. The findings indicate three interconnected transformations: the decentralization of literary gatekeeping, the transformation of readers into active cultural intermediaries, and the emergence of algorithmic visibility as

a new mechanism of literary circulation. The relationship among these transformations can be summarized in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Comparison of the Conventional Literary System and the Digital Platform System

Aspect / Dimension	Conventional Literary System	Digital Platform System
Gatekeeping & Access	Publisher as gatekeeper	Platform as mediator
Evaluation & Critique	Critic as evaluator	User as reviewer/curator
Global Circulation	Translation as major route of international circulation	Translation combined with digital sharing
Authority & Visibility	Literary institution as legitimizing authority	Community and engagement as sources of visibility
Distribution & Format	Book distribution	Multimodal circulation
Recognition & Reach	Canonical recognition	Algorithmic discoverability
Reader's Role	Reader as consumer	Reader as participant and producer

This transformation indicates that the contemporary circulation of Indonesian literature operates through an increasingly hybrid system. Institutional legitimacy remains important, but it is now accompanied by participatory and algorithmic mechanisms.

Transformation of literary gatekeeping: from canon to algorithm

One of the most significant findings concerns the transformation of literary gatekeeping. In the conventional literary system, access to broader literary recognition is mediated by institutions. Publishers, editors, critics, literary festivals, universities, cultural organizations, and translators perform selection functions that determine which works are published, promoted, translated, and discussed.

Such mechanisms have historically been important in the formation of literary canons. A literary work that receives repeated institutional recognition may eventually acquire canonical status. The process, however, is selective. Not every literary work receives the same opportunity to enter publishing networks, literary criticism, educational curricula, or international translation programs.

The digital environment changes this structure by creating alternative routes of circulation. An author can now publish a poem directly through Instagram or Facebook, upload a poetry performance to YouTube, serialize a narrative through Wattpad, or distribute short literary content through TikTok. These practices reduce the dependence on traditional publishing structures at the initial stage of circulation.

However, the disappearance of one gatekeeping mechanism does not necessarily mean the disappearance of gatekeeping itself. Instead, gatekeeping is transformed. The crucial question shifts from “Who has the authority to publish this work?” to “How does this work become visible among millions of other digital contents?”

This is where algorithms become significant. Digital platforms must organize enormous quantities of content and determine which materials are displayed to particular users. Recommendation systems, personalized feeds, trending mechanisms, search functions, and engagement metrics all contribute to the visibility of digital content.

Consequently, literary works are incorporated into an attention economy in which visibility becomes an important form of cultural value.

The shift can therefore be represented as: The transformation can therefore be understood as a shift from institutional gatekeeping to platform mediation, followed by the emergence of algorithmic visibility. This shift should not be interpreted as a complete replacement of the canon by algorithms. Canonical institutions continue to influence literary education, publishing, criticism, and historical recognition. Rather, the digital environment creates an additional layer of selection. A literary work may now gain substantial public attention before receiving formal institutional recognition.

This condition complicates the conventional relationship between popularity and literary legitimacy. A poem may become widely circulated because a particular line resonates with users, because its visual presentation is attractive, or because it is incorporated into a popular trend. Its circulation is therefore influenced not only by literary characteristics but also by the communicative affordances of the platform.

Van Dijck et al. (2018) describe platform societies through processes of datafication, commodification, and selection. These processes are particularly relevant to literary circulation. Every interaction with literary content—viewing, liking, commenting, saving, sharing, or following—can generate data. Such data may subsequently contribute to the platform's determination of what content should be recommended. Literary visibility thus becomes partially dependent on measurable forms of user engagement.

This produces an important paradox. Digital platforms appear to democratize literary publication because almost anyone can upload content. At the same time, they introduce new forms of inequality because not every uploaded work receives comparable visibility.

The digital environment therefore replaces the scarcity of publication opportunities with a scarcity of attention. In the traditional system, the major problem may have been access to publication. In the platform system, the problem becomes discoverability. This distinction is crucial for understanding the position of Indonesian literature in the digital era.

This transformation of gatekeeping and reader agency is clearly evident in contemporary Indonesian literary practices. A prominent example is the trajectory of Leila S. Chudori's novel *Laut Bercerita* (2017). While initially published by an established conventional publisher (KPG) and recognized for its historical aesthetic value, the novel experienced an unprecedented second wave of popularity and cross-generational reach primarily driven by "BookTok" (TikTok) and "Bookstagram" communities. Readers generated thousands of short video reviews, aesthetic quotes, and emotional reactions, turning a heavy historical narrative into a viral cultural phenomenon.

A related pattern can be observed in the platformization of literature through digital-first authors such as Nadhifa Allya Tsana (*Rintik Sedu*) and Marchella FP (*Nanti Kita Cerita Tentang Hari Ini*). Originating through digital platforms and related media, their works developed substantial digital readerships before entering major publishing and audiovisual circuits. These cases illustrate how reader engagement on digital platforms can precede and influence subsequent institutional recognition, thereby altering the conventional direction of literary mediation.

Readers as curators and cultural intermediaries

The second major finding concerns the transformation of the reader. In conventional literary communication, the reader is generally positioned at the end of the production-distribution-consumption chain. The author produces the work, the

publisher distributes it, and the reader consumes it. Digital platforms disrupt this linear model.

Readers can now become distributors, reviewers, curators, interpreters, translators, and even producers of derivative literary content. A reader who shares a poem on Instagram is not simply responding to the work. The reader is actively extending its circulation. A reader who produces a TikTok review of an Indonesian novel is performing a form of literary mediation. A reader who creates a YouTube reading of a poem participates in its reinterpretation and redistribution.

Jenkins (2006) describes this transformation through the concept of participatory culture. Digital media encourage users to become active participants in cultural production rather than remaining passive consumers. Participation is therefore not an additional activity that occurs after consumption; it becomes part of the circulation process itself.

In literary contexts, participatory culture creates new forms of cultural intermediaries. These intermediaries do not necessarily possess formal positions within literary institutions. They may be ordinary readers, students, teachers, book reviewers, content creators, or members of online literary communities. Their authority emerges from interaction and participation.

This transformation is particularly important for Indonesian literature because digital communities can provide alternative mechanisms for discovering works that may not receive extensive attention from mainstream literary institutions. A relatively unknown poet, for example, may build an audience through consistent digital publication and interaction with readers.

The process may subsequently create a feedback loop: The process may subsequently create a feedback loop in which literary works generate reader engagement, encourage sharing, increase visibility, attract new readers, and stimulate further engagement. The role of the reader therefore becomes structurally different. The reader is no longer simply the endpoint of literary communication but one of its driving forces.

This development also modifies the concept of literary reputation. Traditionally, reputation may develop through publication history, critical reception, awards, and institutional recognition. In digital environments, reputation can also emerge through followers, comments, shares, recommendations, and community recognition.

Such indicators should not automatically be equated with literary quality. Nevertheless, they have become important mechanisms through which works and authors become visible. The transformation can be described as the movement from reader-consumer to reader-participant.

This participatory dimension also creates new possibilities for interpretation. Readers can respond immediately to literary works, disagree with authors, provide alternative readings, connect texts with contemporary social issues, or compare them with works from other cultural contexts. As a result, meaning is increasingly produced through interaction rather than through a one-directional transmission from author to reader.

This condition resonates with Damrosch's (2003) understanding of world literature as a mode of reading. When a literary work moves beyond its original context, it may acquire new meanings through new reading communities. Digital platforms accelerate this process because they allow readers from different geographical locations to encounter and respond to the same literary content.

Digital platforms and the global mobility of Indonesian literature

The third major finding concerns the relationship between digital platforms and the global mobility of Indonesian literature. From the perspective of world literature, mobility is fundamental. A work becomes part of world literature when it moves beyond its original cultural environment and enters other systems of reading.

Historically, translation has been one of the most important mechanisms of such mobility. Translation enables literary works to cross linguistic boundaries and enter new literary systems. Publishers, translators, literary agents, festivals, and cultural institutions then function as mediators between literary cultures. Digital platforms introduce additional pathways.

An Indonesian literary work can now circulate internationally through a combination of text, image, sound, video, and translation. An Indonesian poem may be accompanied by an English translation in an Instagram post. A poetry performance may include English subtitles on YouTube. A literary discussion may be streamed internationally. A novel may be discussed by readers outside Indonesia through online reading communities.

The important point is that digital circulation does not eliminate translation. Instead, it changes its position within the circulation process. Translation can now occur before formal international publication, alongside publication, or through informal user participation.

This creates what may be called distributed translation. Instead of translation being performed exclusively by professional translators and publishers, fragments of literary works may be translated by readers, teachers, students, fans, or online communities.

Although such translations may not always meet professional standards, they can function as initial bridges between languages and cultures. This phenomenon is relevant to Damrosch's (2003) conception of literary mobility. A work may acquire a new life when it enters a different cultural context. Digital platforms accelerate the movement from local circulation toward transnational visibility. However, transnational visibility should not be confused with complete integration into the global literary canon. A work appearing on an international user's social media feed has achieved visibility, but this does not necessarily mean that it has obtained institutional recognition.

Therefore, two dimensions of literary worldliness should be distinguished: visibility across borders and institutional recognition across borders.

Digital platforms have particularly strong potential to expand the first. The second continues to depend substantially on translation, publishers, critics, universities, festivals, literary prizes, and cultural institutions. This distinction is important because it prevents an overly technological understanding of world literature. Digital platforms create opportunities for literary mobility, but they do not automatically guarantee lasting global recognition.

Despite the theoretical promise of global connectivity, the transnational mobility of Indonesian literature through digital platforms encounters structural linguistic and algorithmic barriers. As Casanova (2004) points out, the global republic of letters is structured by deep linguistic inequalities, in which peripheral languages like Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) face inherent systemic disadvantages compared to hyper-central languages like English. In digital ecosystems, this inequality is compounded by platform architectures. Recommendation algorithms rely heavily on geofencing, user language settings, and localized engagement data. Consequently, Indonesian literary posts frequently become trapped within localized 'digital echo chambers'—circulating

intensely among Indonesian speakers globally, but rarely breaking through to non-Indonesian reading publics. While automated translation tools and user-generated 'distributed translations' offer initial bridges, they often fail to translate complex cultural subtleties or nuance, highlighting that algorithmic recommendation alone cannot fully dismantle global sociolinguistic hierarchies.

The changing meaning of literary legitimacy

The fourth finding concerns the transformation of literary legitimacy. In conventional literary culture, legitimacy is frequently associated with institutional recognition. Publication by a respected publisher, positive critical reception, inclusion in literary histories, awards, and academic discussion contribute to the construction of literary value.

Digital culture introduces additional forms of legitimacy. A work may receive legitimacy from a community of readers who repeatedly recommend and discuss it. An author may establish credibility through sustained engagement with followers. A poem may acquire cultural significance because it becomes associated with a particular social experience or community.

This can be understood as participatory legitimacy. Participatory legitimacy does not necessarily replace institutional legitimacy. Instead, both systems interact. For example, a literary work that becomes popular on social media may subsequently attract the attention of publishers. Conversely, a work published by an established institution may gain renewed visibility through social media circulation.

The relationship can therefore be represented as: The relationship can therefore be understood as a reciprocal interaction among institutional recognition, digital visibility, and community participation. This circular relationship is one of the most important characteristics of contemporary literary culture. It also challenges traditional assumptions concerning the direction of literary prestige. In the conventional model, legitimacy tends to move from institutions toward readers. In the digital model, legitimacy can also move from readers toward institutions.

Readers can make a work visible first, after which institutions respond. This reverses the direction of cultural mediation. Such a transformation may be particularly significant for literary works that emerge outside dominant publishing centers. Digital platforms can provide alternative spaces in which local or peripheral literary voices become visible before entering established literary institutions.

Nevertheless, this potential should not be romanticized. Platform visibility remains dependent on algorithms, infrastructure, digital literacy, and access to technology. The apparent openness of digital publication therefore coexists with structural inequalities.

To understand this shifting dynamic of legitimacy, Bourdieu's (1993) concept of the literary field (*champ littéraire*) provides valuable insight. Traditionally, literary capital was accumulated almost exclusively through autonomous institutional gatekeepers—critics, prestigious publishing houses, and academic bodies who possessed the power of consecration. In the digital platform era, however, the field is undergoing a restructuring. Digital platforms introduce a competing mechanism of accumulation: popular or algorithmic capital, quantified via engagement metrics, follower counts, and community virality. While traditional institutional capital remains essential for long-term historical canonization, platform-mediated capital offers immediate cultural visibility and economic leverage. Contemporary Indonesian literary actors thus navigate a dual-legitimacy system, strategically converting algorithmic popularity into institutional recognition, and vice versa.

Algorithmic visibility and the economy of attention

The fifth finding demonstrates that literary circulation on digital platforms is increasingly embedded within an economy of attention. The fundamental resource is no longer only the availability of literary content but the limited attention of users.

A poem may be publicly accessible but practically invisible. This distinction between accessibility and visibility is central to understanding platform-mediated literary culture. Traditional publishing operates under conditions of material scarcity. Books require paper, printing, storage, distribution, and physical retail space. Digital platforms dramatically reduce many of these material barriers. However, they produce another form of scarcity: user attention.

Millions of literary and non-literary contents compete for the same limited attention. Algorithms attempt to manage this competition through recommendation and personalization. Content that generates strong engagement may receive greater exposure. The result is an environment in which literary works can become visible through patterns of interaction.

This process creates opportunities but also risks. The opportunity is obvious: works from outside established literary centers can potentially reach audiences without first passing through traditional gatekeepers. The risk is that literary content may increasingly be shaped according to platform preferences.

Sorter texts, emotionally intense quotations, visually attractive presentations, and easily consumable narratives may be more compatible with certain forms of digital circulation than complex texts requiring sustained attention. This does not mean that digital platforms necessarily reduce literary quality. Rather, they create new selection pressures.

Authors may consciously or unconsciously adapt their literary practices to the expectations of platform audiences. A poet may produce shorter poems because they are easier to display on social media. A writer may serialize a narrative because serialized content encourages repeated engagement. A literary reviewer may simplify a complex interpretation to make it more suitable for short-form video.

The platform therefore does not merely distribute literature. It can also influence the forms in which literature is produced and presented. This is a crucial extension of the concept of algorithmic gatekeeping. The algorithm does not necessarily tell the author what to write. However, authors who wish to remain visible may adapt their practices to the communicative and economic structures of the platform. Consequently, literary production and literary circulation increasingly become interconnected.

This shift towards an attention economy is deeply tied to the logic of platform capitalism (Nieborg & Poell, 2018). Platforms are not neutral conduits; their proprietary algorithms reward specific content formats that maximize user retention and continuous interaction. As a result, algorithmic selection introduces a new normative aesthetic regime. To gain visibility within engagement-driven metrics, authors and creators are incentivized to produce 'platform-native' literature—characterized by shorter stanzas, visual presentation (such as typography paired with background audio), high emotional intensity, and episodic cliffhangers suitable for serialized platforms like Wattpad or TikTok. The platform does not merely distribute literary texts; it actively shapes literary poetics and reader expectations, replacing the traditional critic's aesthetic judgment with algorithmic optimization for virality.

Indonesian literature between opportunity and dependency

The digital transformation provides Indonesian literature with significant opportunities for international visibility. The country's large digital population, multilingual cultural environment, and active literary communities provide a substantial foundation for digital literary circulation.

The apparent democratization of digital literary circulation should therefore be examined alongside the unequal conditions under which visibility is produced. Noble (2018) demonstrates how search systems can reproduce existing social inequalities rather than provide a neutral space for discovery. Although her analysis focuses on racialized representations in search engines, it offers a useful critical perspective for examining how algorithmic systems may privilege some forms of content and marginalize others. Tufekci (2015) similarly encourages attention to the broader social consequences of algorithmic decision-making. Applied cautiously to literary circulation, these perspectives suggest that access to digital publication does not necessarily guarantee equal discoverability for Indonesian literary works across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Yet visibility also creates dependency. When literary circulation takes place primarily through commercial platforms, authors and readers become dependent on infrastructures that they do not control. Changes in recommendation systems, content policies, monetization mechanisms, or platform ownership can influence literary visibility.

This condition creates a new contradiction: digital platforms decentralize literary production while centralizing infrastructural control. Anyone may produce content, but the infrastructure through which that content circulates belongs to relatively powerful platform companies. Therefore, the transition from canon to algorithm should not be understood as a transition from centralized power to complete freedom. It is better understood as a reconfiguration of power.

Traditional literary power is distributed among publishers, critics, universities, cultural institutions, and literary organizations. Digital power is distributed among users and communities but also concentrated within platform infrastructures and algorithmic systems.

The result is a hybrid literary ecology. Indonesian literature therefore enters world literature through multiple pathways: These pathways include institutional circulation, translation, digital participation, platform recommendation, and the development of transnational readership. This hybrid model provides a more appropriate framework for understanding contemporary literary mobility than a simple opposition between traditional and digital literature.

From literary canon to algorithmic culture

The expression "from canon to algorithm" should therefore be understood as a conceptual metaphor for the transformation of literary visibility rather than a claim that the canon has disappeared. The canon operates through historical memory and institutional recognition. The algorithm operates through real-time selection and personalized visibility.

The canon tends to ask: *Which works deserve to be remembered?* The algorithm tends to ask: *Which content should this user see now?* These are fundamentally different questions. The first concerns long-term cultural memory. The second concerns immediate attention.Yet the two systems can interact. Content that becomes visible through algorithms may eventually enter institutional discussions. Conversely, canonical

works can become newly visible through algorithmic circulation. The contemporary literary field is therefore characterized by interaction between these two systems.

This interaction also suggests that future studies of world literature need to move beyond the exclusive study of texts and translation. Researchers should also investigate the infrastructures through which texts circulate. The object of literary study increasingly includes not only the literary work itself but also the platform ecology surrounding the work.

This includes readers, communities, algorithms, recommendation systems, interfaces, translation practices, and patterns of digital engagement. In this sense, digital platforms do not merely provide new places for literature to exist. They change the conditions under which literature becomes visible, meaningful, and mobile. The position of Indonesian literature in world literature must therefore be reconsidered within this expanded ecology.

The central issue is no longer simply whether Indonesian literature can enter the global literary canon. The question is also how Indonesian literary works circulate through digital networks, how readers activate their meanings, how algorithms shape their visibility, and how such visibility can eventually interact with established institutions of literary recognition. The transformation can be understood as a process in which the literary canon interacts with institutions, digital platforms, readers, and algorithms, ultimately shaping literary visibility and creating new pathways for Indonesian literature to enter world literature.

CONCLUSION

The transformation of Indonesian literature in the digital platform era demonstrates that literary circulation is no longer determined exclusively by conventional literary institutions. Publishers, translators, critics, universities, literary festivals, and other cultural institutions continue to play important roles in establishing literary value and long-term recognition. However, digital platforms have introduced additional mechanisms through which literary works can become visible, circulate, and acquire new readers.

The central finding of this study is that the movement from “canon to algorithm” should not be understood as the disappearance of the literary canon. Rather, it describes a transformation in the mechanisms through which literary visibility is produced. The conventional literary system relies heavily on institutional selection and historical processes of canonization, whereas the platform environment introduces algorithmic selection, user engagement, recommendation systems, and networked participation. These mechanisms operate simultaneously and increasingly interact with one another.

From the perspective of Damrosch’s (2003) concept of world literature, this transformation expands the possibilities of literary mobility. Indonesian literary works can now travel beyond their original cultural environments through social media, digital communities, online publishing, audiovisual adaptation, and informal translation. Digital platforms therefore provide additional routes through which Indonesian literature can participate in transnational literary conversations.

At the same time, the study shows that increased accessibility does not necessarily produce equal visibility. Digital platforms democratize literary production by allowing users to publish and distribute content with relatively low institutional barriers. However, visibility remains mediated by algorithms and platform infrastructures. Consequently, the digital literary field contains a paradox: literary production becomes

more decentralized while the infrastructures controlling visibility remain highly centralized.

The transformation of the reader is another important implication. In the platform era, readers are not merely consumers of literary works. They can become curators, reviewers, promoters, interpreters, translators, and producers of derivative content. In Jenkins's (2006) terms, literary participation increasingly reflects the logic of participatory culture, in which the boundaries between producer and consumer become less rigid. Readers therefore become active agents in the circulation and reinterpretation of Indonesian literature.

These findings have theoretical implications for world literature and comparative literary studies. The study suggests that literary mobility should no longer be examined only through texts, translations, publishers, and literary institutions. It should also be examined through the digital infrastructures that shape how texts are encountered and circulated. The contemporary object of literary circulation is therefore not merely the literary text but an ecosystem consisting of texts, readers, communities, platforms, algorithms, and cultural institutions.

For Indonesian literature, this transformation offers significant opportunities. Digital platforms can enable literary works that have limited access to international publishing networks to reach new audiences. Nevertheless, international visibility should not be equated automatically with literary recognition or canonical status. Algorithmic popularity is temporary and may be determined by engagement patterns rather than long-term literary value.

The future position of Indonesian literature within world literature will therefore depend on the interaction between institutional and digital forms of literary circulation. Translation, professional publishing, literary criticism, and cultural institutions remain essential, but they increasingly coexist with digital communities, participatory readers, and algorithmic systems. The challenge is not simply to move from the canon to the algorithm but to understand how these two systems interact in shaping the mobility, visibility, and cultural significance of Indonesian literature.

In this sense, Indonesian literature in the digital era can be understood as participating in world literature through a more complex and multilayered ecology. The central question is no longer only whether Indonesian literature can enter the global canon, but also how Indonesian literary works circulate, who activates their meanings, which communities sustain them, and how platform infrastructures determine their visibility. Such a perspective opens a new direction for comparative literary studies in which world literature is examined not only as a corpus of texts but also as a dynamic network of circulation, participation, translation, and algorithmic mediation.

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