

Hegemony of Gender Ideology Through Hyperbody of Indonesian Artificial Intelligence

Sari Monik Agustin

Universitas Multimedia Nusantara, Tangerang, Indonesia
sari.monik@lecturer.umn.ac.id

Artikel

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Abstract

Some time ago, Indonesia was amazed by the presence of a female celebrity named "Lentari van Lorainne" who is familiarly called Riri. Riri's figure is the center of attention because she is Indonesia's first virtual celebrity created based on Artificial Intelligence (AI). The media depiction of Riri's figure is very identical to the depiction of the feminine gender promoted by patriarchy. This article will use Gramsci's thinking about Hegemony, and is equipped with the concepts of hyperbody, gender ideology, gender stereotypes and Artificial Intelligence. The paradigm used is critical with a text analysis method from the most posts on Lentari van Lorainne's account, @lentaripagi. The results of the research show that the figure of Riri also perpetuates gender stereotypes of the female body by presenting Riri as a young woman with beautiful associations that make people stunned, has an ideal body and a beautiful Indonesian-Dutch face, likes sports and travelling and is charming. This perpetuation occurs through posts and comments on Riri's Instagram account. This perpetuation was carried out by the traditional intellectuals behind the creation of the character Riri as a hyperentity. There is no counter to the hegemony of gender ideology found in this paper.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Hegemony, Gender Ideology, Gender Stereotype, Digital Body

Abstrak

Beberapa waktu yang lalu, Indonesia dibuat kagum oleh hadirnya seorang selebriti wanita bernama "Lentari van Lorainne" yang akrab disapa Riri. Sosok Riri menjadi pusat perhatian karena dia adalah selebriti virtual pertama Indonesia yang diciptakan berdasarkan Kecerdasan Buatan (AI). Penggambaran media tentang sosok Riri sangat identik dengan penggambaran gender feminin yang dipromosikan oleh patriarki. Artikel ini akan menggunakan pemikiran Gramsci tentang Hegemoni, dilengkapi dengan konsep-konsep hiperbodi, ideologi gender, stereotip gender, dan Kecerdasan Buatan. Paradigma yang digunakan adalah paradigma kritis dengan metode analisis teks dari unggahan-unggahan paling banyak di akun Lentari van Lorainne, @lentaripagi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sosok Riri juga melanggar stereotip gender terhadap tubuh perempuan dengan menghadirkan Riri sebagai seorang wanita muda dengan asosiasi kecantikan yang membuat orang terpesona, memiliki tubuh ideal dan wajah Indo-Belanda yang cantik, gemar berolahraga dan traveling, serta memiliki pesona. Pelanggaran ini terjadi melalui unggahan dan komentar di akun Instagram Riri. Pelanggaran ini dilakukan oleh intelektual tradisional yang ada di balik penciptaan karakter Riri sebagai entitas hiper. Tidak ditemukan perlawanan terhadap hegemoni ideologi gender dalam tulisan ini.

Kata Kunci: Kecerdasan Buatan, Hegemoni, Ideologi Gender, Stereotip Gender, Tubuh Digital

INTRODUCTION

The history of artificial intelligence began 70 years ago, with the basic idea that one day computers will have the ability to think for themselves like us (bbc.co.uk, 2023). The presence of developments in computers, robots and self-driving cars is a sign of this development, as is the presence of AI Personalities such as AI Celegram and Influencers in our media. Since the beginning of this decade, the presence of AI celebrities has colored social media. These include Liam Nikuro and Imma from Japan, Shudu in England, Miquela Sousa who is of Brazilian-Spanish descent, Rozy from South Korea, and others (Fauziah, 2021).

In April 2023, Indonesia was excited by the presence of a female celebrity named "Lentari van Lorraine" who is familiarly called Riri. Riri's figure is the center of attention because she is not a human, but an Indonesian virtual celebrity created based on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Riri is described by various media as a beautiful woman who makes people stunned (Piri, 2023), has an ideal body and beautiful appearance typical of Indo-Dutch (Aditya, 2023), likes sports and traveling (Haq, 2023) and is charming (Mutmainah & Yahya, 2023). Riri herself, as an Instagram celebrity, has also become an endorser for several products, such as coffee shops and gym equipment, as well as being a figure who is depicted as looking real by being a traveller Instagram celebrity who is on holiday in Thailand or taking photos with the caption "OTW" in her car.

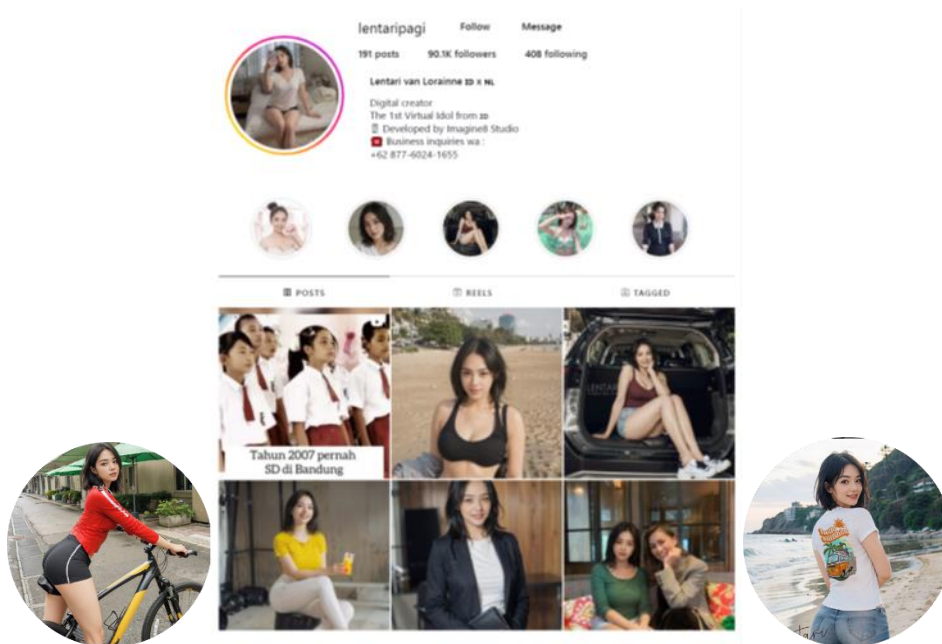


Figure 1. Riri's Instagram Account @lentaripagi
Source: IG @lentaripagi, 2023

Riri already has 90 thousand followers (October 2023) and calls herself the 1st Virtual Idol From Indonesia on her Instagram Profile. Riri was developed by Imagine8 Studio and has opened up opportunities for business collaboration by placing her WA number on her Instagram account @lentaripagi and portfolio. Her face is sweet, beautiful, white, and hair is not too long. Men who look at it will definitely be amazed. It's not surprising, every time she uploads content on her Instagram account, many guys comment, almost 300 in fact (Maryoto, 2023).



Figure 2. Riri's Portfolio
Source: IG @lentaripagi, 2023

Riri is an entity that is not real, but from this depiction it is very clear that Riri's figure really resembles a human, especially a young woman. The media's depiction of Riri is very stereotypical. Young, beautiful, has an ideal body, which can be said to be a feminine gender stereotype attached to women.

The media is often an agent of gender socialization, and even contributes to perpetuating mainstream gender stereotypes of women. Several studies discuss this. Agustin's research (2013) talks about how the gender stereotype of women in cooking programs on television has shifted from the stereotype of women cooking in the kitchen to being career women and intellectual chefs. However, nothing has changed about women's femininity, so the author concludes that what has happened is only a modification of women's gender stereotypes but with the same gender ideology. Alvares' research (2018) also shows that there is online staging of femininity: disciplining through public exposure in Brazilian social media. She showed that online environments as facilitating both the performance and the staging, within a Brazilian context, of a sexualized femininity that is stereotypically reductive to hegemonic definitions of body image and bodily practices. Research by Butkowski, Dixon, Weeks & Smith (2020), found that gender display is prevalent in women's Instagram selfies but presented in subtle ways. In addition, women who incorporate and exaggerate gender displays in their selfies tend to receive more feedback. All of them have something in common, that media in whatever form perpetuates and even contributes to disciplining gender stereotypes of women. This shows a process of perpetuating the hegemony of gender ideology. Hegemony is famously known as the main concept from a marxist, Antonio Gramsci. In contrast to Marx, in marxist thought, class is divided into 3 parts, namely capital owners, the working class, and a new class has emerged, namely the middle class. Where does the 'role' of the middle class lie in the development of Marxist thought? Marx mentioned the concept of 'circuit of capital'. This concept refers to the processes of production, product circulation, exchange (or purchase), and product consumption or product use. New profits/surplus can be obtained when the flow becomes a complete circle. This is where the middle class is located in production relations, namely as coordinators or connectors or triggers so that the capital circuit becomes a complete circle, from the production process to product use/consumption, namely by playing a role in advertising, marketing, PR and market research activities. The middle class, as owners of cultural capital, 'wraps' consumption in culture and shares ideas about culture, thereby creating sustainable cultural consumption. Culture becomes a commodity, so the production process ultimately depends on the elaboration of ideas in culture.

Marxist thinking on ideology is closely related to Gramsci's thinking about hegemony. What is hegemony? The concept of hegemony first appeared in Notes on the Southern Question in 1926 (Adian, 2011). Hegemony means an individual's inability to believe that he or she has beliefs, or an individual's inability to believe that he or she can have different beliefs from other people. Beliefs are hegemonic, meaning that adherents of these beliefs must believe that the beliefs they have must be maintained in order to continue to demonstrate their existence (Jones, 2009). The concept of

hegemony is the main and most original idea in Gramsci's philosophy and social theory. Gramsci defines hegemony as cultural leadership exercised by the ruling class (Ritzer & Goodman, 2012). He describes hegemony as a form of mass obedience without coercive action. This concept in principle refers to the ability of the dominant class in a certain historical period to exercise social and cultural leadership, and by means of this without coercion, aims to maintain their power over the direction of the nation in the economic, political and cultural fields (Hartley, 2004).

Previous research spoke at the level of female stereotypes related to real physical bodies, so what about Riri as an artificial intelligence? Therefore, this article discusses 2 things: **What is the body of the AI celebgram, Lentari van Lorainne? And how does the hegemony of gender ideology work through the body of AI celebgram, Lentari van Lorainne?**

METHODS

This study's frameworks are Antonio Gramsci's key concept of hegemony, supported by Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality, along with the ideas of digital bodies, gender ideology, gender stereotypes, and artificial intelligence. These theoretical frameworks will guide the analysis in understanding the power dynamics and social constructs reflected in the selected Instagram posts. The paradigm used in this study is the post-modernism paradigm. Postmodern researchers see no separation between the arts or humanities and social sciences. They share the critical social science goal of demystifying the social world, and want to deconstruct or tear apart surface appearances and reveal the hidden structure (Neuman, 2014). This research adopts a qualitative approach with a text analysis strategy, which deconstructs the most discussed posts (comments and likes) on the Instagram account @lentaripagi.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hegemony is not something that is simply given by a group, but is formed. There is a long process that accompanies the formation of hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). Hegemony itself comes from ancient Greek, at that time it was used to refer to the stronger position that the city of Athens and then Sparta (after defeating Athens) had among the Greek cities which were all formally equally sovereign (Magnis-Suseno, 2003). For Gramsci, hegemony is interpreted as a compromise between the ruling group and the dominated group. The ruling party and the dominated party reach a point of equilibrium (balance) in the economic context (Gramsci, 1971).

Gramsci highlights intellectuals who work on the side of the capitalists, achieving cultural leadership and gaining the approval of the masses who conform and accept that cultural leadership. In the hegemony mechanism, the role of intellectuals is important because they can be called the leading class with high levels of persuasive power. There are two intellectuals in Gramsci's eyes, namely Traditional Intellectuals and Organic Intellectuals. Traditional intellectuals prioritize academic functions and carry out roles according to the working system. Organic intellectuals act more as agents of change, as liaisons or provocateurs for the proletariat in achieving class consciousness. The class consciousness exhaled by organic intellectuals then directs the proletariat to fight against hegemony and carry out revolution. Therefore, the concept of hegemony then helps us not only to understand the concept of domination, but also explains Gramsci's thinking about revolution as social change (Ritzer, 2012). Cultural and ideological hegemony operates through civil society institutions, such as education, family, church, mass media, popular culture and others. Mass media and popular culture are subject to hegemonic production, reproduction and transformation.

One of believes that becoming hegemony is Gender Ideology. Macionis (2017) defines gender as "the significance a society attaches to the biological categories of female and male" - the importance that society gives to the biological categories of male and female. Meanwhile, Ryan (2013) defines gender as "a social definition of how to be or the ways of "being" considered appropriate for one's sex category. Because gender can be enacted in an infinite variety of ways, and indeed is, we know that gender is a social construction and, therefore, learned behavior" – a social definition of how someone fits into a sex category. Gender is a person's learned behavior and is the result of social construction.

Gender is the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category (Brower, 2017). One aspect of gender of particular importance is that of gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles. Gender stereotypes are expectations, both positive and negative, about how a certain gender should behave and think. Gender stereotypes are collections of gender-specific attributes or traditional norms that differentiate typical feminine behavior patterns from typical masculine behavior patterns in society. Traditional gender roles are a sort of gender stereotype that set forth the behavioral expectations of both males and females (see also Nasucha and Kertanegara, 2020). The gender identity of most children is shaped by the universally shared beliefs about gender roles that are held by their society. These shared beliefs often take the form of oversimplified gender stereotypes (Brower, 2017).

Based on Jones' thinking, hegemony means an individual's inability to believe that he or she has beliefs, or an individual's inability to believe that he or she can have different beliefs from other people. Beliefs are hegemonic, meaning that adherents of these beliefs must believe that their beliefs must be maintained in order to continue to demonstrate their existence. The hegemony of ideal gender ideology is maintained by the creator of Riri (Imagine8 Studio) by presenting a stereotype of a young woman who takes a position on the side of men's interests, namely highlighting the beauty and sexiness of a young woman's body.

My interpretation, Riri's creators are people with high digital creative abilities and knowledge. That is, they can be called intellectuals. However, in Gramsci's perspective, they are traditional intellectuals whose knowledge creates an entity that helps perpetuate the gender ideology instilled by patriarchy, where women are depicted only as men's objects. I am sure that Riri's appearance is not far from (virtual) body commodification by making Riri's body a commodity in an effort to increase the number of followers and endorsements. This is proven by Riri's portfolio (see picture 2) which even provides an endorsement package. Riri's creators actually participated in the commodification of young women's bodies which is reflected in Riri's appearance. The knowledge they have in Marxist thought has a role in the circuit of capital. They are a link between production and consumption activities. By making Riri an endorser, Riri's creators are wrapping consumption with culture, so that consumption is sustainable. Creating Riri through their intellectual knowledge and making them endorsers as a link to the product consumption activities of capital owners, makes the circuit of capital continue to run. This culture nowadays is digital culture, where consumers are invited and participate digitally using social media logic, namely interacting with Riri's account digitally. This logic includes the culture of account following, giving reactions, comments and sharing their opinions.

These images (figure 3) are the pinned posts when this research was conducted.



Figure 3. Riri's Pinned-posts
Source: IG @lentaripagi, 2023

The three images (picture 3) above are Riri's pinned posts, meaning these three images will continue to be the first part of all Riri's posts on @lentaripagi. Of the three images, the photo of Riri in the middle has the most reactions (39,176 likes).



Figure 4. Riri's Most Like Post
Source: IG @lentaripagi, 2023

Figure 4's caption:

"Lentari di sore hari yang cerah di Pattaya Thailand

Lagi mau nunggu sunset sambil cari café untuk menepi 😊😊

Meskipun ditemein sama team Riri yang masi pada jomblo semua yang penting di nikmatin aja moment nya.

Disini siapa ya yang masi jomblo? Enjoy your weekend ya nikmatin aja momentnya. Karena semua kan indah pada waktunya"

(Captions are as written, including spelling and punctuation errors).



Figure 5. Caption and Pinned Comment
Source: IG @lentaripagi, 2023

Figure 4 has 1 pinned comment (picture 5) from @bobbypratama07 which states : Ya Allah, yang seperti ini maksud hamba. Ya Allah jika memang didunia ini semua nya hanyalah titipan, maka titipkanlah yang seperti ini kepadaku. Aamiin (Comment is as written, including spelling and punctuation errors).

This comment has 193 likes and 37 replies.

Picture 4 shows Riri as a young adult woman, white bright skin-tone, with a sharp nose, straight hair parted in the middle, with a pointed chin, black eyes, full breasts and a flat stomach. Riri wore a black bikini top with jeans. The photo background matches the caption, Riri is single and on holiday in Pattaya, Thailand.

The @lentaripagi account never explicitly states Riri's gender. However, Riri has the physical characteristics of a woman with a feminine gender. Because Riri is an AI entity, the creator of Riri described Riri as a young adult woman with feminine attributes. Riri's creator created a mixed Asian and European (Indo-Dutch) woman with the characteristics of an ideal woman. Riri's characteristics are very identical to the characteristics of traditional ideal female gender roles which are expected to accompany the appearance of a woman, a young adult woman, white bright skin-tone, with a sharp nose, straight hair parted in the middle, with a pointed chin, black eyes, full breasts and a flat stomach.

Problems arise when sexism occurs, namely the belief that one gender is considered superior to another gender, which then leads to gender inequality. Gender inequality in society grows and is rooted in daily life interactions and practices. This inequality then becomes a collective agreement and is maintained by generations, making one gender subordinate. In a patriarchal society, the masculine gender is attached to men and is considered superior to the feminine gender which is attached to women (Agustin, 2013). In fact, in several studies, women are so superior that they need men in terms of daily activities, in fulfilling sexual needs and in terms of social status. In essence, women are depicted as figures who rely heavily on men for everything (see Trijayanto, 2017). One of topic in gender is about body. In this context, digital body and hyperreality of body.

Between simulation, simulacrum, and hyperreality is actually a process that cannot be separated. Simulations are positioned as a process of forming representations, while simulacrum is a manifestation of the image of the simulation process so as to give rise to a new world in the form of hyperreality.

Baudrillard (1988) describes phases of the image: (1). It is the reflection of a basic reality, (2). it masks and perverts a basic reality, (3). it masks the absence of a basic reality, (4). it bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum. In the first case, the image is a good appearance; the representation is of the order of sacrament. In the second, it is an evil appearance: of the order of maleficence. In the third, it plays at being an appearance: it is of the order of sorcery. In the fourth, it is no longer in the order of appearance at all, but of simulation.

Baudrillard (1988) provides an explanation related to the description above that the signs that appear in the first phase are signs that still display a fully representative representation without anything additional to the sign. In the second stage, the sign has undergone changes in its representation so that the sign does not display a sign that is completely attached to itself. And in the final phase, the sign no longer displays a real representation but rather a simulation inherent in itself. The transition from the last stage of change to a sign disguises the meaning of a sign that has been attached to it which ends in completely hiding the meaning attached to a sign. So, when a sign experiences a change in its inherent meaning, what is present is only nostalgia (our memory of something) regarding the meaning of a sign. When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia takes on its own full meaning. There is a proliferation of origin myths and signs of reality; remaining truth, objectivity, and authenticity. There is an increase in actual and lived experience; figurative revival in which object and substance have been lost. This is how simulation appears in the phases that concern us: a real, neo-real and hyperreal strategy.

Hyperreality consists 100% of simulations. Hyperreality is not produced, but is always ready to be produced. The simulation seems more real than reality, more beautiful than the beautiful, truer than the truth itself. In hyperreality, when there is no explanation for something from its source, then we believe that the source is the original (Agustin, 2022). This hyperreality then appears in many thoughts related to the digital world, especially those related to visual hyperreality in the virtual world (see Astuti, 2015).

Based on Baudrillard's thoughts, several thoughts about the body discussed in the digital world have been put forward as Digital Body (Agustin, 2018) and Hyperdigitalization of the Body (Agustin,

2022). Digital body is a non-material body containing Horcruxes, digital objects of dwelling words and thought, in the form of Digital Data and Avatars, which are Extended-Self in a post-human era with characteristics: Controlled-Dematerialized Self, Hyperreality-Reembodiment Self, Social-Supportive Self, Developed-Extended Self and Social-Affiliated Self. It means the body, due to digital innovations, can be changed and reconstructed like engine-part replacement. The body also can be transformed into a non-material form and reconstructed in digital, such as Avatars (see Lupton in Silk, Andrews & Thorpe, 2017).

Lugrin, Latt and Latoschik (2015) states that Avatars have (1) a strong resemblance to humans, but usually have; (2) limited freedom of movement, and/or often only; (3) part of the body is visible. The influence of one important top-down factor, virtual body realism in relation to human visual similarity (or Anthropomorphism), has not been widely studied, especially research related to natural whole-body interactions (see Pelau, Nabija & Ene, 2021). Susan De Weger (2015) writes about The Second Self to explain more about an online artist. The term 'Second Self' refers to your online identity, to your virtual life lived in parallel to the real world.

Agustin's research (2022) talks about Body Hyperdigitalization. What is meant by Body Hyperdigitalization? Some cases show that the digital body is an extended self, but other cases show the phenomenon of no connection between the digital body and the physical body. Agustin (2022), citing Baudrillard, describes these body changes in 4 phases of Hyperreality. First, it is a reflection of basic reality. Second, it masks and distorts basic reality. Third, the question of basic reality, and fourth, whatever it is, whatever its reality: it is its own pure simulacrum. Quoting Baudrillard, hyperreality is more real than the real, so that this virtual body has a new identity that even the owner of the body recognizes as a better and more real self than his own physical body. This phenomenon is called by Agustin (2022) Hyperdigitalization of the Body, which can be interpreted as a process of the body becoming hyperreal, through stages: (1). Physical body, (2). Simulation Body; (3). Digital Body, and (4). Virtual Bodies.

Previous research has discussed how the process of a body becomes a digital body and how this body undergoes a transformation into the hyperreality of the body. This study also focuses on the hyperreality of the body, with the key difference being that in previous research, the body that undergoes the transformation into the digital is a real (original) body. In contrast, this study will examine a body that is, from the outset, not real, or is a hyperbody.

Riri's confirmed status as a single woman is also to attract the attention of men who are her audience. This goal can be seen from the comments that are deliberately pinned. The comments from the @bobbypratama07 account represent comments from men (around 300 account owners with names identical to men's) who show that women like Riri are ideal women, where they want Riri as the perfect female life partner. This is represented by comments in the form of prayers as a form of deepest desire conveyed to an entity that can grant whatever one desires (Allah). This comment further emphasizes that the boundaries between Riri as an entity that does not actually exist and a real entity are becoming blurred, because her existence is desired as something that is expected to exist in a real human relationship.

When discussing Artificial Intelligence Celebrities like Riri, the explanation regarding hyperdigitalization of the body is not appropriate. Riri as a virtual entity does not go through the stages from a physical body to a virtual body as Agustin (2022) mentioned in her research. Riri is an entity created to resemble a digital female figure and this figure is then given the identity of a young woman who is beautiful and charming, has Indo-Dutch looks, and has a multitude of activities that enable her to become someone who can inspire her audience on Instagram. The stage where the physical body turns into a virtual body has not been found, but hyperreality still occurs. Riri is not based on a real entity, but the creation of Riri is based on the reality of a woman's body, complete with facial expressions and body shapes that are made to resemble the reality of a young woman. I tend to call this body the Digital Body in Hyperreality of Body, where there is a simulation of a woman's physical body which is imitated in the form of Digital Data and Avatar.

This stage is then continued with cultivating an identity to create the figure of Riri. Giving the name Lentari van Lorainne to Riri, creating an Instagram account to follow, creating a figure with information about Indo-Dutch ancestry, a lover of sports, drinking coffee and traveling are all part of the creation of a Virtual Body that stands alone. The absence of a Physical Body as a basis is the difference between Body Hyperdigitalization and this phenomenon. The author calls this phenomenon more accurately seen as Hyperreality of Body and is referred to as body that is hyper or I proudly call it, Hyperbody, an unreal body, which in the process becomes an independent reality and is believed to be an entity that "exists". This entity can be categorized as hyperreal because it has real followers, and is believed to be able to exert influence by being positioned as a virtual celebrity/influencer.

Riri is a form of artificial intelligence created as a real entity that looks more real than a real woman. Riri is a form of deep-fake which is characteristic of the arrival of an era called Godler (2020), Post post-truth or in Riri's case the author feels it is more appropriate to call it Neo Post-Truth, where reality is no longer obscured, but what is real and no, it has become completely blurred.

CONCLUSION

The results of the research show that the figure of Riri also perpetuates gender stereotypes of the female body by presenting Riri as a young woman with beautiful associations that make people stunned, has an ideal body and a beautiful Indonesian-Dutch face, likes sports and travelling and is charming. This perpetuation occurs because of the values that are spread through posts and comments on Riri's Instagram account. This perpetuation was carried out by the intellectuals behind the creation of the character Riri as a hyper entity, who in the context of Gramsci are referred to as traditional intellectuals. There is no counter to the hegemony of gender ideology found in this paper. An academic recommendation that can be made is the need for further research to critically examine the economic motivations behind the creation of AI bodies based on female representations. Specifically, it is important to investigate whether there is a commodification of the female body through the perpetuation of existing gender ideology hegemony. Future studies should explore how the construction of AI-generated female avatars may serve as a tool for reinforcing patriarchal ideals, while also considering the potential economic interests that drive the creation and commercialization of such hyperbodied figures. This line of inquiry could shed light on how the intersection of technology, gender, and market forces contributes to the ongoing objectification and commodification of women in digital spaces.

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