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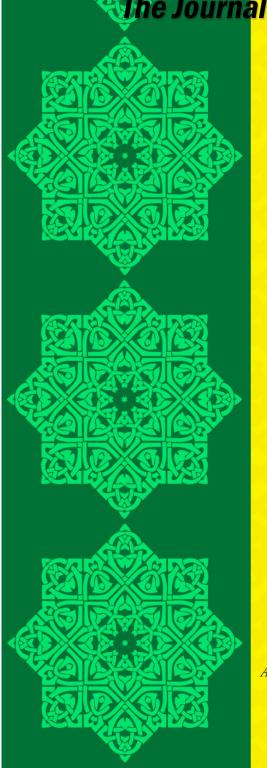
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# COVID-19 POEMS AS CULTURAL RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC IN INDONESIA

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#### **Abstract**

Covid-19 has shocked entire world in almost all aspects of social and individual life. It appears that this pandemic has threaten individual and public health, infused political concerns between and within countries, and caused economic downturn. Studies on response to the pandemic have covered wide ranges of issues such as policies, psychological, economic, education etc. This article is interested in exploring how people response to this pandemic through the use of their cultural stocks, particularly the use of poetry. In so doing, this article samples two poems written government public figures. The poems are Corona Virus written by M. Jusuf Kalla, a former vice president of Indonesia, and Corona Virus Disease 2019 written by Sri Purnomo, the Regent of Sleman Yogyakarta, and analyses their contents. This study uses netnography method in collecting data and makes use of qualitative text analysis, particularly qualitative content analysis, in analyzing the available data. By using anthropological approach, this study interprets the interpretations of the pandemic via digging the content of their poems. This study found that interpretations of the pandemic expressed through poems focused on several main themes and that these themes were strongly shaped by their cultural values and beliefs. In other words, their poems are not a mere personal expression but also cultural responses to the covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Covid-19; Pandemic; Response; Poem; Culture.

#### الملخص

لقد صدم 19-Covid العالم بأسره في كل جانب من جوانب الحياة الاجتماعية والفردية تقريبًا يبدو أن هذا الوباء قد هدد صحة الأفراد والمجتمعات ، وأثار مخاوف سياسية بين البلدان وداخلها ، وتسبب في انكماش اقتصادي .غطت الدراسات حول الاستجابة للوباء قضايا مختلفة مثل السياسة وعلم النفس والاقتصاد والتعليم وغيرها .تهتم هذه المقالة باستكشاف كيفية استجابة المجتمع لهذا الوباء من خلال استخدام مخزونهم الثقافي ، وخاصة استخدام الشعر .وهكذا ، يأخذ هذا المقال عينة من قصيدتين كتها شخصيتان

حكوميتان .القصائد هي فيروس كورونا كتها م .تستخدم هذه الدراسة طريقة netnographic في جمع البيانات وتستخدم التحليل النوعي للنص ، وخاصة تحليل المحتوى النوعي ، في تحليل البيانات المتاحة .باستخدام نهج أنثروبولوجي ، تفسر هذه الدراسة تفسير الوباء من خلال استخراج محتويات شعرهم . ووجدت الدراسة أن تفسيرات الوباء المعبر عنها من خلال الشعر تركز على عدة مواضيع رئيسية وأن هذه الموضوعات تشكلت بقوة من خلال قيمهم الثقافية ومعتقداتهم .وبعبارة أخرى ، فإن قصائدهم ليست مجرد تعبير شخصي ، بل هي أيضًا استجابة ثقافية لوباء .COVID-19

الكلمات المفتاحية: Covid-19؛ جائحة؛ إجابة؛ شعر؛ حضاره.

#### Abstrak

Covid-19 telah mengejutkan seluruh dunia dihampir semua aspek kehidupan sosial dan individu. Tampaknya pandemi ini telah mengancam kesehatan individu dan masyarakat, menimbulkan kekhawatiran politik di antara dan di dalam negara, dan menyebabkan kemerosotan ekonomi. Kajian tentang respons terhadap pandemi telah mencakup berbagai isu seperti kebijakan, psikologis, ekonomi, pendidikan dan lain-lain. Artikel ini tertarik untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana respons masyarakat terhadap pandemi ini melalui penggunaan stok budaya mereka, khususnya penggunaan puisi. Dengan demikian, artikel ini mengambil sampel dua puisi yang ditulis oleh dua tokoh publik pemerintah. Puisi tersebut adalah Corona Virus ditulis oleh M. Jusuf Kalla, seorang mantan wakil presiden Indonesia, dan Corona Virus Disease 2019 yang ditulis oleh Sri Purnomo, bupati Sleman Yogyakarta, dan menganalisis isinya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode netnografi dalam mengumpulkan data dan menggunakan analisis teks kualitatif, khususnya analisis isi kualitatif, dalam menganalisis data yang tersedia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan antropologi, penelitian ini memaknai interpretasi pandemi melalui penggalian isi puisi mereka. Studi ini menemukan bahwa interpretasi pandemi yang diungkapkan melalui puisi berfokus pada beberapa tema utama dan bahwa tema-tema ini sangat dibentuk oleh nilai-nilai budaya dan kepercayaan mereka. Dengan kata lain, puisi-puisi mereka bukan sekadar ekspresi pribadi tetapi juga respons budaya terhadap pandemi covid-19.

Kata Kunci: Covid-19; Pandemic; Respon; Puisi; Kebudayaan.

#### A. Introduction

The world has been rocked by a new wave of viral pandemic since the end of 2019. Beginning from Wuhan, China, the virus has spread to various parts of the world across geographic boundaries, countries, and social identities. In Indonesia, the spread of the Covid-19 virus was revealed in March 2019. Although information about the dangers of this virus has been widely shared since the end of 2019, the central government has not taken serious steps in early stages of the pandemic<sup>1</sup>. There was even a tendency to take it lightly, as if the virus belongs to those far away (China) and will not reach Indonesia.

This outbreak has a multidimensional impact. The immediate impact of this outbreak is a massive health threat. In mid-March 2020, the number of infected cases in Indonesia was still below ten, growing to around 400 in mid-April, and to a total of 45,891 cases on June 21, 2020. The health impacts mentioned above also fuel psychological effects in the form of panic and even trauma. In fact, since the finding of the covid-19 case in mid-March, the public has begun to respond to this outbreak with panic. The government has repeatedly asked the public not to be panic but it seems that people have lost confidence in the government. Fear spreads to various regions at once and has far-reaching effects. Some rural areas have even taken the initiative to carry out their own lockdowns for protecting their villages.<sup>2</sup> The psychological shock even permeate psychological trauma. Abdullah in his study of the impact of covid-19 in Indonesia noted that there are four domains of psychological trauma manifested in Indonesian society, namely social isolation, hysteria, individual violence, and collective violence.<sup>3</sup>

The Covid-19 outbreak also had an impact on political aspects, especially in disrupting the coordination between the central government and local governments in handling the outbreak. Not only are rural communities taking the village quarantine initiative, the central government's slow response to this pandemic has also been responded by several local governments by implementing regional quarantine measures. However, their move caused tensions with the central government since the central government rejected the regional government quarantine. In order to protect their people, some governors in several provinces have taken steps to implement social restrictions and territorial

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Jefferson NG, "Can Indonesia's Fight against COVID-19 Overcome Troubled Central-Regional Coordination?," New Mandala, April 28, 2020, https://www.newmandala.org/can-indonesias-fight-against-covid-19-overcome-troubled-central-regional-coordination/.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Intan Kumalasari, "Viral, Ini 7 Potret Unik 'Lockdown' Di Berbagai Desa Di Indonesia," Merdeka, March 28, 2020, https://www.merdeka.com/sumut/7-potret-unik-lockdown-di-berbagai-daerah-di-indonesia.html.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Irwan Abdullah, "Psychological Trauma: Theory , Research , Practice , and Policy COVID-19: Threat and Fear in Indonesia," *American Psychological Association*, 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> NG, "Can Indonesia's Fight against COVID-19 Overcome Troubled Central-Regional Coordination?"

quarantine. The governor of DKI province, Anies Baswedan, was the first to take these steps. President Jokowi rejected his policy,<sup>5</sup> and the central government indeed canceled Annies Baswedan's three policies, namely restricting public transportation, stopping AKAP bus services, and regional quarantine.<sup>6</sup> In Papua, the Regent of Sorong and the Governor of Papua province, for example, took a regional quarantine measures by prohibiting all activities from leaving or entering their territories, but the central government rejected the steps.<sup>7</sup>

On the economic aspect, the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak is estimated to be quite huge. President Jokowi<sup>8</sup> estimates that Indonesia's economy will face very heavy challenge and economic growth could even reach minus 3%. This impact on the economy will hit four main sectors, namely households, MSMEs, corporations and the financial sector.<sup>9</sup> Susilawati, Falefi, and Purwoko's study reveals that the sector most affected is the household economy.<sup>10</sup> This impact on the economy leads to increased unemployment and poverty. A survey conducted by the World Labor Organization (ILO) of 571 companies in April revealed that 90% of companies are experiencing financial problems and about 63% of the companies surveyed have reduced the number of workers. It also found that many other companies were planning to do the same.<sup>11</sup> The Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) estimated that the number of layoffs could reach 15 million workers throughout Indonesia.<sup>12</sup>

The pictures of the impacts of covid-19 on public health, psychological, political, and socio-economic aspects, both from media reports and research findings,

Marchio Irfan Gorbiano and Budi Sutrisno, "Jokowi Refuses to Impose Lockdown on Jakarta," 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Supriatin, "3 Kebijakan Anies Baswedan Dibatalkan Pemerintah Pusat," Merdeka, April 1, 2020, https://www.merdeka.com/jakarta/3-kebijakan-anies-baswedan-dibatalkan-pemerintah-pusat.html.

 $<sup>^7</sup>$  Dian Erika Nugraheny, "Mendagri Tak Setuju Pemprov Papua Tutup Wilayah Akibat Covid-19," Kompas, March 25, 2020, https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2020/03/25/07591621/mendagri-tak-setuju-pemprov-papua-tutup-wilayah-akibat-covid-19?page=all.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Andhika Prasetyo, "Presiden: Ekonomi Indonesia Akan Sangat Berat," Media Indonesia, June 19, 2020, https://mediaindonesia.com/ekonomi/321836/presiden-ekonomi-indonesia-akan-sangat-berat.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Antara, Adinda Pryanka, and Sapto Andika Candra, "Empat Sektor Ekonomi Yang Paling Tertekan Pandemi Covid-19," 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Susilawati Susilawati, Reinpal Falefi, and Agus Purwoko, "Impact of COVID-19's Pandemic on the Economy of Indonesia," *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute* (BIRCI-Journal): Humanities and Social Sciences, 2020, https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v3i2.954.

<sup>11</sup> Rezha Hadyan, "Survei ILO: Dua Dari Tiga Perusahaan Di Indonesia Berhenti Beroperasi," Ekonomi Bisnis, May 18, 2020, https://ekonomi.bisnis.com/read/20200518/12/1242174/survei-ilo-dua-dari-tiga-perusahaan-di-indonesia-berhenti-beroperasi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Cnnindonesia.com, "Bukan 2 Juta, Kadin Sebut Korban PHK Akibat Corona 15 Juta," 2020.

have enriched our insights on the multidimensionality of the pandemic. However, as has been shown in earlier paragraphs that there have been some studies that have covered impacts on health, psychology, politics, and socio-economic, but rarely we find studies on the impact on culture. In other words, there is very little attention to the impact of this pandemic on culture. This study, therefore, seeks to fill the gap that exists in the present studies. Certainly there are many impacts of this pandemic on cultural life. This study's attention, however, is not on negative impacts but rather on positive impacts namely cultural creativity in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. This study focuses especially in the realm of cultural production in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia.

Theoretically, people will always carry out cultural production because cultural development is part of everyday social life. However, in general, cultural production that takes place in normal situations encounters heavy pressure when facing massive disasters such as pandemic. Even normal cultural mechanisms can collapse and become dysfunctional when faced with a disaster or disease outbreaks. In some cases normal cultural mechanisms collapsed and became abandoned when facing abnormal situations such as natural disasters and disease outbreaks. In several African countries, natural disasters in the form of drought, for example, have destroyed the cultural apparatus of society, which had functioned well in normal situations.<sup>13</sup>

In connection with the Covid-19 outbreak, although the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in the simplification, adjustment, postponement, and even the cancellation of many cultural activities, this pandemic has not dampened human cultural creativity to produce (and reproduce) culture in response to the the pandemic. The concept of cultural production itself, although it has been widely used, is an elusive concept and is not easily agreed upon by experts in the socio-humanities field. In fact, it can be said that it tends to be difficult to find an explicit definition of this concept and its scope. Some experts see cultural production as part of economic activity in the cultural realm. This perspective, then, places cultural production as part of the cultural industry or a new economic form.<sup>14</sup>

This way of placing culture in a position no longer autonomous and under industrial (economic) control has actually been one of the objections of scholars for a long time. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, for example, in Dialectic of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> J. W. M. van Dijk, "Livestock Transfers and Social Security in Fulbe Society in the Hayre, Central Mali," in *Coping with Insecurity: An Underall Perspective on Social Security in the Third World*, 1994, 97–112; M.E. de Bruijn, "The Sahelian Crisis and the Poor: The Role of Islam in Social Security among Fulbe Pastoralists, Central Mali," *Focaal: Tijdschrift Voor AntropologieFocaal* 22/23, no. 47 (1994).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Dominic Power and Allen J.Scott, *Cultural Industries and the Production of Culture*, ed. Dominic Power Allen J.Scott, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Enlightenment describe this phenomenon as part of cultural degradation where culture loses its authentic meaning and becomes part of the reproduction of capitalism.<sup>15</sup>

Among anthropologists, the concept of cultural production, whether used explicitly or implicitly, shows quite wide variations because it depends on the phenomena being studied and the theoretical orientation on which they are based. Some circles see cultural production as part of the political-cultural mechanism in the nationalism project of a nation-state as well as fulfilling commercial interests. Anthropologist such as Abu-Lughod, for example, wrote that cultural producers "are working within structures of power and organizations that are tied to and doing the work of national or commercial interests". <sup>16</sup> In line with Abu-Lughod, anthropologists who concentrate on studying nationalism as a cultural project consider the production and reproduction of culture as a political-cultural project of nationalism. <sup>17</sup>

In local or in the sub-national levels, cultural production and reproduction are often part of the contestation over natural and social resources from different groups. <sup>18</sup> explores the cultural movement of Ajeg Bali, a movement that aims to strengthen and protect Balinese culture but contains a strong tendency to produce and strengthen Balinese ethnic identity while excluding immigrant groups. Cultural production in the forms of identity construction and customary politicization were also found by Tania Li in Central Sulawesi, <sup>19</sup> Maribeth Erb in West Flores, <sup>20</sup> and Eindhoven in the Mentawai Islands. <sup>21</sup>

Although many studies have shown that cultural production is often part of identity construction, it does not necessarily mean that cultural production is always dealing with identity construction. The studies focusing on identity-building as discussed earlier are unable to reveal any phenomenon of cultural production that take place outside identity and political contest. This study focuses on this non-political cultural production, particularly the creation of literary works in the forms of poems as response to covid-19 pandemic. In general, cultural production is often a response to situations within or outside the boundaries of the culture itself, both to social and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (London: Allen Lane, 1972).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Lila Abu-Lughod, "The Interpretation of Culture(s) after Television," in *The Fate of* "Culture": Geertz and Beyond (Berkeley: University of Califronia Press, 1999).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Ernest Gellner, *N Ations and N Ationalism*, 1st ed. (New York: Cornell University Press, 1983); R. Foster, "Making National Cultures In The Global Ecumene," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20, no. 1 (1991): 235–60, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.20.1.235.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> H. S Nordholt, "Bali: Sebuah Benteng Terbuka," in *Politik Lokal Di Indonesia*, ed. H.S. Nordholt and G. van Klinken (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2007).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Tania M. Li, "Adat Di Sulawesi Tengah: Penerapan Kontemporer," in *Adat Dalam Politik Indonesia*, ed. Jamie S. Davidson, David Henley, and Moniaga Sandra (Jakarta: KITLV, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Erb Maribeth, "Kebangkitan Adat Di Flores Barat: Budaya, Agama, Dan Tanah," in *Adat Dalam Politik Indonesia*, ed. David Henley Jamie S. Davidson and Sandra Moniaga (KITLV, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Myrna Eindhoven, "Penjajah Baru? Identitas, Representasi, Dan Pemerintahan Baru, Di Kepulauan Mentawai Pasca-Orde," in *Politik Lokal Di Indonesia*, ed. H.S. Nordholt and G. van Klinken (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2007), 87–115.

natural situations, by using the internal resources in the culture. This study considers cultural production as an indication of the creative process that cultural producers have in both making meaning of and facing against Covid-19 disease outbreak. In this context, culture is no longer understood as Geertz's proposal which treats culture as a system of solid shared meaning, passed down from generation to generation.<sup>22</sup> Rather, culture is seen as an ongoing process that involves culture infuses human activity, and human creativity modifies and (re)produces culture.<sup>23</sup>

The cultural production in the forms of poems analysed in this study not only reflecting individual creativity but also reflecting the socio-cultural context in which the poems were born, and the agentive capacity of the writers who innovate their culture in creative ways. Here, a poem is not seen as something born from divine inspiration or an asocial empty space, rather it is but born in a certain socio-cultural context. Michael R. Hill calls "poetry is a sociological reality". Thus, this study argues that the poems written by the two public figures are responses to and reflections of realities, both sociocultural and natural realities. In brief, they are responses to the reality of covid-19 pandemic and reflection of their culture's ways of making meaning of the pandemic.

Cultural production, as discussed earlier, is a concept with a broad meaning. This study, however, focuses only on the producing of poems in responding covid-19 pandemic. More specifically, this study focuses on poems related to Covid-19 written by non-literary circles, namely public figures who are retired government official and active government official in Indonesia. The poems are Corona Virus written by M. Jusuf Kalla, a former vice president of Indonesia, and Corona Virus Disease 2019 written by Sri Purnomo, the Regent of Sleman Yogyakarta. There are two reasons for choosing these two figures and their poems. First, as far as can be traced, there are not many public figures from the government, both active and retired, write poem as an expression in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most government figures have responded to this pandemic in a very formalistic way based on formal rules or policies. These two figures were able to transcend the tradition of rigid expression and communication through the expression of the poetry they wrote and read them publicly. Second, these two government figures not only present the cultural views of the Indonesian people in the form of beliefs, values, and world views in dealing with the pandemic, but their poems also contain the message of a public leader to the people. The chosen dictions reflect a sense of being a leader who has concern for the fate of their nation and people. In this sense, their poems add value to the character of leaders who have concerns and responsibilities towards their nation and people.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511812507.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Michael R. Hill, *Sociology and Poetry: An Introduction* (Sociological Origins 4: Spring, 2006), https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/sociologyfacpub/356.

Regarding to the theoretical paradigm of cultural production, the main question in this study is how cultural production in the form of poems become part of cultural response to the pandemic. This study, therefore, explores cultural values contained in the poems about Covid-19 written by the two non-poets public figures.

#### **B.** Materials and Methods

The data of cultural production analysed in this study are two poems written by two public figures. The poems were written in response to the Covid-19 pandemic that hit Indonesia since March 2020. Since this study relies on data sources available on the internet, the data collection uses netnography, an ethnography which makes the internet a research field,<sup>25</sup> or more precisely passive netnography.<sup>26</sup> We collected data from various websites on the internet and selected two poems written by public figures as the units of analysis. They were chosen to explore not only the authors' views on the Covid-19 pandemic but also the values, norms, beliefs, and world-views behind their poems.

Since this study treats poems as text and the text is part of the document, this study uses document analysis method to examine and interpret data in order to draw meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. <sup>27</sup> Unlike the tradition in literary analysis of poetry, the analysis of this study uses the tradition in social science, which emphasizes poems as documents containing socio-cultural information. The kind of document analysis utilized here is qualitative content analysis <sup>28</sup> with the purpose is to find the main themes in the poems. After the data collection, the analysis process begins with the classification of the poetry text into meaning units, squeezes them into condensed meanings, and then interpretations are carried out to find sub-themes and main themes of the poems. This gradual process reveals the perceptions, world-views, values, norms, hopes, beliefs, emotions, which also reflect the views, values, beliefs and expectations of the wider community.

#### C. Results and Discussion

This section will present two poems written by two public figures. The first writer is the former vice president of Indonesia and the other is an active official, the regent of Sleman. Both of them are not poets, but they express their views, feelings, ideas, and hopes about the Covid-19 outbreak through their poems, which are

 $<sup>^{25}</sup>$  R Kozinets, Netnography: Doing Ethnography Research Online (London: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2010).

Leesa Costello, Marie-Louise McDermott, and Ruth Wallace, "Netnography," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16, no. 1 (December 2017): 160940691770064, https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917700647.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Corbin J., & Strauss, A., *Basic of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory (3rd Edition)*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2008).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. (California: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2015).

certainly worth studying academically. It is worth studying because in general poems written by figures outside the literary circles has received less attention in the academic world, therefore, it has been under-studied. In the view of anthropology, however, the poems written by non-literary circles are as important as those written by literary circles. It is because these poems reflect culture, a stock of knowledge and habitus that guide how to interpret a reality and how to respond to that reality as well as the values, beliefs, feelings, ideas, and worldviews that are involved in the whole process. With that in mind, the two poems written by retirees and active officials are also worthy of academic research. In addition, the poems written by the two government officials (retired and active) also contain certain contents about the views of officials (retired or active) on the fate of the nation and their people who are under the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### 1. Corona Virus by M. Jusuf Kalla

In 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world including Indonesia, Muhammad Jusuf Kalla also responded it. One of the responses was in the form a poem entitled Corona Virus, which he uploaded to his Instagram account on March 28, 2020.<sup>29</sup> We present the poem in bahasa Indonesian followed by an English translation.

#### Corona Virus

Semua bermula dari Wuhan Menyebar kemana-mana tanpa pemberitahuan Melampaui batas negara dan jabatan Memapar segala bangsa tanpa ampun

> Di Korea menyebar dari tempat peribadatan Melanda Qom, tempat suci Syiah di Iran Di Italia merebak di kota mode Milan Di negeri ini diawali di tempat hiburan

Hari-hari ini penuh dengan kekhawatiran Di mana doa terbaik sudah dipanjatkan Bekerja, belajar, dan ibadah sudah dirumahkan Menunggu nasib baik penuh harapan

> Ya Tuhan, berilah kepada para ahli, kemampuan Untuk menemukan yang dicari, obat dan vaksin Sebagaimana janji-Mu, bahwa semua penyakit ada obatnya Agar kami dapat beribadah lagi di masjid dengan gembira

Kepada bangsa, bersatu dengan penuh semangat Semua dapat membantu sesuai kemampuan

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Republika.co.id, "Ini Puisi JK Soal Pandemi Covid-19," 2020.

Bagi yang ahli membantu yang sakit Bagi yang mampu membantu yang rentan

> Kepada para dokter dan perawat, terima kasih atas ketulusan Dan atas upaya yang penuh risiko dan pengorbanan Kepada para relawan, terima kasih atas pengabdian Akhirnya kepada Allah jualah kami memohon

(Jakarta, 28 Maret 2020.)

English Translation of the Poem is as follows:

#### Corona Virus

#### M. Jusuf Kalla

From Wuhan it all began Spread out everywhere without a word Went beyond state boarders And neglected ranks and positions

> Mercilessly infecting whoever found In Korea it emerged from worship places It surged in Qom, the Holy Shiite place in Iran In Italy it spilled over from the fashion city of Milan

In this country it started from a café
Our lives are filled with horror these days
And the best prayer is already offered
From home we work, we learn, and we worship

While waiting for the hopeful fortune Oh God, please give the experts A way to discover what is wanted, medication and vaccine As You have promised us in the Quran;

That each disease has its medicine So that we can worship again in the mosque with joy To the nation, let's unite vigorously All of us can contribute to our capacity;

The experts help the sick,
The haves should help the poor.
Those with strength are to help the weak.
To all doctors and caregivers, we thank you for the sincerity

All the risks you take and your sacrifices, we do appreciate, To all the volunteers, our countless gratitude is addressed for All the jobs you have devoted And to Allah and only He, hope and save we beg. (Jakarta, 28 March 2020)

Tabel 1.
Content analysis of the Poem *Corona Virus* 

Meaning units	Condensed Meaning Units	Interpretations of condensed meaning	Sub-theme	Theme
From Wuhan it all began Spread out everywhere without a word Went beyond state boarders And neglected ranks and positions.  Mercilessly infecting whoever found	The corona virus started in Wuhan then spread across national borders and social status	The virus spreads regardless of the country's spatial boundaries and social status	Corona viruses crosses spatial and social boundaries	The virus spreads across spatial, social, sacred and profane boundaries.
In Korea it emerged from worship places, It surged in Qom, the Holy Shiite place in Iran In Italy it spilled over from the city of mode, Milan In this country it started from a café	The virus spreads in places of worship as well as in modern lifestyle centers.	The virus spreads anywhere, including in the sacred and profane domains.	Corona crosses the boundaries of the sacred and profane realms	
Our lives are filled with horror these	Anxiety spread, people pray and try to move places of study,	People worry, pray and change habits, and hope for the	In the face of this epidemic human has	Combining spirituality and real action to

days And the best prayer is already offered From home we work, we learn, and we worship While waiting for hopeful fortune.	work, and worship to their homes.	best results.	prayed and taken actions.	face the outbreak.
Oh God, please give the experts a way to discover what is wanted, medication and vaccine, As You have promised us in the Quran; That each disease has its medicine. So that we can worship again in the in mosque with joy	Pray that experts will find a cure and vaccine for the corona virus so that Muslims can worship at the mosque again.	The discovery of drugs and vaccines is a way to return to worship in mosques.	Longing to worship at the mosque	Longing to worship at the mosque
To the nation, let's unite vigorously. All of us can contribute to our capacity; The experts help the sick, The haves should help the poor. Those	Urging the Indonesian people to unite and provide assistance to the sick and vulnerable in dealing with the corona outbreak.	A leader urges to unite and help each other among members of a nation in dealing with the corona virus.	The importance of unity and mutual help in the frame of nationhood	Unity and mutual help as members of one nation.

with strength are				
to help the				
weak.				
To all doctors and caregivers, we thank you for the sincerity. All the risks you take and your sacrifices, we do appreciate, To all the volunteers, our countless gratitude is addressed for All the jobs you	Thank you to the paramedics and volunteers for the sacrifice and service that was full of risks.	Appreciation for the contribution of paramedics and volunteers	Recognition of the role of medics and volunteers.	Upholding the value of sacrifice and devotion.
And to Allah and only He, hope and save we beg.	Finally, we ask Allah for help	Acknowledge God's power and human weakness	Dependence on Allah	Allah is the supreme protector

Jusuf Kalla is a successful businessman as well as a skilled state official. He has held the position of vice president twice and has great concern with the progress of the Indonesian people and the nation. The poem, written at the end of March 2020, shows his concern with the huge threat the Covid-19 outbreak poses to Indonesian people and the nation. One strong theme in the poem is that of the virus's ability to transcend spatial and social boundaries. Viruses cross borders between countries so easily, and can even enter not only profane spaces with worldly hustle and bustle but can also penetrate into sacred spaces with full of the spirit of sacredness. This unit of meaning seems to give cautionary advice that this virus does not consider social status, national boundaries, and profane and sacred boundaries.

In another meaning unit, the author expresses the socio-cultural reality that, in facing the threat of the corona virus, humans are not only to pray with the best prayers they can, but also to make efforts to prevent the spread of the virus. One of the efforts is in the form of changing the culture of work, study, and worship from office, school, and mosque to work from home, learn from home, and worship from home.

In another part, Jusuf Kalla also expressed his longing for the mosque as a place of worship for Muslims. This unit of meaning represents the social reality of the appeal of scholars and the government that, during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is better for all people to perform their worship in their homes with family. In some areas in Indonesia that implement large-scale social restrictions (PSBB), it is prohibited to perform worship in mosques. This forces many people who usually perform their prayers five times a day at mosques to move to their respective homes. In the mosque, they usually worship and also carry out various recitation activities and develop close social interactions among the congregation. All the atmosphere is completely lost when they have to worship at home. Longing for the atmosphere of the mosque is indeed much expressed in various conversations on social media, and even in poems, including this poem written by Jusuf Kalla.

Jusuf Kalla also did not forget to emphasize the theme of nationhood by urging the importance of unity and urged all parties to take part in the efforts to fight against the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic based on their respective abilities. This is a typical expression of a nation's leader (even though he is retired). This unit of meaning and theme reveals ideal leadership values as a leader who has concern for the fate of the nation and its people in a very threatening pandemic. This meaning is reinforced by its high appreciation for the doctors, nurses, and volunteers who have fought on the front lines in the face of the spread of the Covid-19 virus. In many mainstream media and social media medics are often portrayed as heroes in the fight against Covid-19. Some of the key words in this unit of meaning are sacrifice, dedication, full of risk, and sincerity are indeed the key characteristics of the personality and role of heroes. No wonder medics and volunteers are considered heroes in the context of the war against this pandemic. Several cases of doctors and nurses who died as a result of contracting Covid-19 spread when carrying out their jobs expressed widely in various media and reinforced the impression that they were heroes who were at great risk. This poem expresses this cultural commonsense.

This poem contains a meaning unit that reveals the writer's world-view about human's dependency on the God, since the God owns the final determinancy of this pandemic problem. This is a reflection of the author's beliefs as a Muslim. This expression is common in many Muslim societies, namely praying to Allah for Allah's help. In fact, in mid-May 2020 the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia and the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) held a joint prayer nationwide intended to pray to God to end the Covid-19 outbreak. President Joko Widodo and vice president Ma'ruf Amin attended the event.

Muhammad Jusuf Kalla was a former vice president of the Republic of Indonesia. He was a state official who loves to write poetry. Several years ago, in 2017, he read a poem he wrote especially as a gift for his 50th wedding anniversary to his wife, Mufidah. It was a celebration of Jusuf Kalla and Mufidah's golden anniversary. The event, which was held at the Dharmawangsa Hotel, Jakarta, on 27

August 2017 was used by Jusuf Kalla to read his poem entitled Half a Beautiful Century. $^{30}$ 

#### 2. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) by Sri Purnomo

In addition to a poem with the title Corona Virus written by M. Jusuf Kalla (former vice president), a poem entitled Coronavirus Disease 2019 written by Sri Purnomo (active regent) is also circulating.<sup>31</sup> The following is a poem by Sri Purnomo.

#### Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19)

Hadir duka nestapa berdesir, berpuluh telah luluh, beratus telah pupus. Tawa riang berganti kecamuk pikir, sungguh kesabaran yang jadikan kita lulus.

Telah satu purnama mencabik beribu jiwa, segala doa melangit penuhi cakrawala.

Bila ini peringatan untuk segala hamba, hanya kepada-Nya kita minta segala daya.

Angka demi angka bergerak, mencabut kesadaran kita. Kewaspadaan jadi teman sepanjang jalan, anak-anak bangsa merenda cita bersama.

Kedamaian harus terus diperjuangkan, duhai Tuhan pemilik segala kekuasaan.

Segala upaya tak henti kami kerahkan, bilakah corona pergi dari detak kehidupan, jadikan ini pembelajaran atas pentingnya kemanusiaan. Kepada anak-anakku penerus masa depan Sleman, mari bersatu padu kita bergandengan tangan.

Tatap masa depan sepenuh keyakinan, segala ujian harus kita lalui sebagai satu pengabdian.

Pegang teguh wasiat leluhur bangsa kita, agar kita hamemayu hayuning bawono, berjuang berpeluh demi kehidupan bersama. Jaga kelestarian alam, agar damai bahagia sentosa, amin.

The English translation of the Poem is as follows:

#### Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19).

#### Sri Purnomo

Here comes the grief, tens have collapsed, hundreds have passed away.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> (Jaramaya, 2020)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Wahyu Suryana, "Puisi Corona Bupati Sri: Kedamaian Harus Terus Diperjuangkan," Republika Online, April 16, 2020, https://republika.co.id/berita/q8vaw2396/puisi-corona-bupati-sri-kedamaian-harus-terus-diperjuangkan.

Happy laughter changes to tangled minds, and only patients to bring us safe. A full moon has passed that ripped thousands of lives, and all prayers flew the sky to fill the heaven.

If this is meant to warn us, to Him God we beg. Number by number moves up, unplugging our consciousness. Alertness becomes a company, to build a dream for a brighter future.

A peaceful life is to be struggled, oh Lord, the owner of all power. All the efforts we try ceaselessly, to make the corona away from our lives, And we take this as lesson learnt on the meaning of humanity.

To those my Sleman youth, let's unite and walk together hand in hand. Look up to the future convincingly, that these all challenges have to be faced as a consecration/devotion/dedication.

Embrace our ancestors' will, so we could hamemay hayuning bawono,

To struggle and sweat for our life together.

Let's keep the sustainability of nature, for our peaceful and happy future, amen.

Tabel 2. Content Analysis of the Poem *Corona Virus Desease 2019*.

Meaning units	Condensed	Interpreta	Sub-theme	Theme
	Meaning	tions of		
	Units	condensed		
		meaning		
Here comes the	Corona has	Corona	The	
grief, tens have	claimed many	takes away	importance	
collapsed, hundreds	victims,	life and	of patience.	
have passed away.	turning joy	joy, so we		
Happy laughter	into anxiety. It	need		
changes to tangled	takes patience	patience.		Be patience
minds, and only	to get through			and ask God
patients to bring us	it.			for help.
safe.				
A full moon has	If this is God's	Corona as a	God is the	
passed that ripped	warning then	warning, so	ultimate	
thousands of lives,	to Allah we	pray to	determinance	
and all prayers flew	ask for help.	God.		
the sky to fill the				
heaven. If this is				
meant to warn us, to				

Him God we beg.				
Number by number	The number of	The	Togetherness	Togetherness
moves up,	victims	togethernes	is needed.	
unplugging our	continues to	s of		
consciousness.	increase, it is	Indonesian		
Alertness becomes	necessary to	citizens is		
a company, the	be alert and	needed to		
nation's children	keep	face		
weave a common	togetherness of	corona.		
goal, to build a	the nation's			
dream for a brighter	children to			
future.	achieve a			
A peaceful life is to	sense of peace.			
be struggled,	_			
oh Lord, the owner	Tell God that	Hope for	Linking all	Hope on God
of all power. All the	all efforts will	God's help	hopes to	
efforts we try	continue and	and make	God.	
ceaselessly, to make	hope that this	the plague		
the corona away	epidemic will	a lesson.		
from our lives,	become a			
And we take this as	lesson for			
lesson learnt on the	humanity.			
meaning of				
humanity.				
To those my	Urge the	The leader	Unity and	Unity and
Sleman youth, let's	Sleman youths	urges	cooperation	cooperation.
unite and walk	to unite and	people to		
together hand in	fight against	unite to		
hand.	this epidemic.	work		
		together.		
Look up to the	Look at the	Be	Plague as a	Facing the
future convincingly,	future with	optimistic	test. facing it	plague as a
that these all	optimism and	about the	as devotion.	dedication
tests/challenges	face the	corona		
have to be faced as	pandemic as a	outbreak.		
a consecration.	consecration.			
Embrace our	Uphold the	Message to	Cooperation	Cooperation
ancestors' will, so	message to	do good for	for	for
we could	strive for life	the world	togetherness	togetherness
hamemayu	together and	for life	_	_
hayuning bawono,	balance with	together.		
To struggle and	nature.			

sweat for our life		
together.		
Let's keep the		
sustainability of		
nature, for our		
peaceful and happy		
future, amen.		

The meaning unit in Sri Purnomo's verse contains several main themes. The theme of suffering due to the Covid outbreak and patience in facing the pandemic are two of the important themes. This theme of patience is coupled with the theme of asking God for help in facing this pandemic. This theme of wishing in God appeared several times. This reflects the world-view (world-view) of the author and the wider public of Indonesian society regarding the faith in the relationship between human beings and God, and the magnitude of God's power. God has power over his creatures including the corona-19 virus. Therefore, asking God's help is the right way besides human efforts to end this plague. Still related to the theme of God's power, the corona pandemic is seen as a test from God, and efforts to face it are seen as dedication.

The theme of unity and cooperation in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic is also an important theme in this poem. Purnomo urges his people, particularly the youth, to to unite and work together to fight the pandemic. This can be understood as a typical expression of a government leader (a bupati) in an area who has concern for the fate of its citizens and encourages citizens' participation in facing a threat.

In certain parts, Purnomo even uses the local language, Javanese, to convey his message in this poem. This reflects the ability of a local leader who understands how to communicate effectively with his people through culturally friendly expressions. In short, the theme of hope and dependence on God's help and the theme of the need for unity and cooperation among people are the two main themes that recur in this poem.

Sri Purnomo is the Regent of Sleman Yogyakarta. He wrote this poem and he read it when attending the Public Figure Reading Poetry Webinar held by the Association of Muslim Scholars throughout Indonesia (ICMI) in Yogyakarta (DIY). His poem entitled Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) contains some important themes. We present the poem in Indonesian followed by an English translation.

#### The Relations of the Poems

In this section we briefly present the relationship between the two poems and reveal the thematic similarities they share. Briefly, the themes of the corona virus poem by M. Jusuf Kalla are the spread of the virus across spatial, social, sacred and profane boundaries; combining spirituality and real action; longing worship at mosque; the weakness of human; pray to the God; the importance of unity and mutual help as members of one nation; the value of sacrifice and devotion; etc. The themes of

the Corona Virus Disease 2019 poem by Sri Purnomo briefly include corona takes away life and joy, so we need to be patience and vigilance; Corona is warning from God, so pray to God and be patience; weakness of human on the one hand and the power of God on the other hand, linking all hopes to God; God is the ultimate determinacy; the importance of unity and togetherness in facing the plague; the pandemic as a test, facing it as devotion and dedication.

First, the two poems contain objective descriptions according to the reality of the pandemic, namely a description of the symptoms of the pandemic and the destructive power of the covid-19 virus; all consequences of the virus in the form of victims of death and illness; also changes in human socio-cultural habits that are forced to be lived. Second, the two poems capture people's subjective emotions in the form of fear and panic, a sense of helplessness; hope and longing for God's help. Acknowledging human weakness and God's power is central in these poems. The dependence on Allah and Allah is the supreme protector. Third, the two poems contain the values and attitudes of leaders who care about the nation and its people. With a position as a leader, the authors encourage the need for optimism, unity, and cooperation between citizens in facing a pandemic.

These three groups of themes reflect culture in the form of how the authors interpret the COVID-19 pandemic, how cultural understanding and interpretation of these symptoms are, the influence of religious beliefs in interpreting and responding to the symptoms of the pandemic, as well as the orientation of cultural values reflected in the authors' expectations.

#### D. Conclusion

Public figures from governmental body are commonly perceived as people who are preoccupied with matters far from the world of art and literature. In Indonesia, not many public figures are capable of writing poem. Muhammad Jusuf Kalla and Sri Purnomo are the exceptions to this common phenomenon. Their verses not only describe an individual response to the Covid-19 pandemic but also reflect a cultural response to this pandemic since the poems reflect the commonsense views and feelings held by common people about covid-19 outbreak.

This study argues that the poems presented are part of the complexity of the cultural response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The cultural response to this pandemic certaintly takes various forms. Poetry, however, has a special place in this issue because in poetry ratio and taste can be mixed, while world views, value systems, cultural meanings, pragmatism, emotions, and beliefs are linked together in meaning units. In the two poems about the COVID-19 pandemic analized in this article, the author's knowledge, emotions, beliefs, and individual hopes record and reflect back on the emotions, hopes, values, beliefs prevailing in the wider society in which the author becomes part of.

In the two poems, the main themes that emerge as the results of the content analysis are themes regarding the reality of the dangers of the Covid-19 pandemic,

encouragement of patience, praise for self-sacrificing, and sincere attitudes for paramedics and volunteers and appreciation for them. There is also a theme of suggestions for increasing optimism, unity, and cooperation in dealing with this pandemic. The two poems also interpret the pandemic as God's trial. The theme of hoping and praying to God is the very central theme of the two poems. All of these themes illustrate the cultural world-views and values prevailing in society.

This article has shown that poem is not born from empty space. It is born from a particular socio-cultural context. In other words, in anthropological view, poem reflects sociocultural life and at the same time, it responds to the developments in the socio-cultural life. In wider sense, poetry and socio-cultural reality contain dialectical relationship between reflections of reality and responses to reality. It is in this context that poetry as a cultural response to the Covid-19 pandemic has its strong meaning. As a final point, this study contributes to an understanding of the complexity of the community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly from the aspect of cultural production in the form of poetry works.

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#### Guidelines

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- 2. Article must be an original work and has not been previously published;
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#### Example in footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Mircea Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), h. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West* (Oxford: One World Publications, 1991), h. 190.

<sup>3</sup>Syeikh Ja'far Subhānī, *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Mu'assasah Al-Tarīkh Al-'Arabī, 2010)., Juz 5, h. 231.

<sup>4</sup>Syeikh Ja'far Subhānī, *Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān*, h. 8-9.

#### Example in bibliography:

Subhānī, Syeikh Ja'far. Mafāhim Al-Qur'ān. Beirut: Mu'assasah Al-Tarīkh Al-'Arabī, 2010.

Eliade, Mircea (ed.). The Encyclopedia of Religion, vol. 8. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

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#### Detail informations of the footnotes:

#### 1. Holy book

Al-Our'ân, Al-Bagarah/2: 185.

Perjanjian Baru, Mrk. 2: 18.

#### 2. Qur'anic translation

<sup>1</sup>Departemen Agama RI, al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya (Jakarta: Darus Sunnah, 2005), h. 55.

#### 3. Book

<sup>1</sup>Muḥammad 'Ajjaj al-Khaṭib, *Uṣl al-Ḥadith: 'Ulumuh wa Muṣṭalaḥuh* (Beirut: Dâr al-Fikr, 1989), h. 57.

#### 4. Translation Books

<sup>1</sup>Toshihiko Izutsu, *Relasi Tuhan dan Manusia: Pendekatan Semantik terhadap al-Qur'an*, terj. Agus Fahri Husein dkk (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2003), h. 14.

#### 5. Voluminous book

<sup>1</sup>Muḥammad al-Ṭâhir b. 'Ashur, *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Vol. 25 (Tunisia: Dâr al-Suḥûn, 2009), h. 76.

¹Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukharī, *al-Jami*' *al-Şaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilm<u>i</u>yah, 1999), h. 77.

#### 6. Article in book

<sup>1</sup>Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Metode Intratekstualitas Muhammad Shahrur dalam Penafsiran al-Qur'an" dalam Abdul Mustaqim dan Sahiron Syamsuddin (eds.), *Studi al-Qur'an Kontemporer: Wacana Baru Berbagai Metodologi Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2002), h. 139.

#### 7. Article in encyclopaedia

<sup>1</sup>M. Th. Houtsma, "Kufr" dalam A. J. Wensinck, at al. (ed.), *First Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. 6 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987), h. 244.

#### 8. Article in journal

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Adlin Sila, "The Festivity of *Maulid Nabi* in Cikoang, South Sulawesi: Between Remembering and Exaggerating the Spirit of Prophet", *Studia Islamika 8*, no. 3 (2001): h. 9.

#### 9. Article in mass media

<sup>1</sup>Masdar F. Mas'udi, "Hubungan Agama dan Negara", Kompas, 7 Agustus 2002.

#### 10. Article in Internet

<sup>1</sup>Muḥammad Shaḥrūr, "Reading the Religious Teks: a New Approach" dalam http://www.shahrour.org/25 Februari 2010/diakses 5 Juni 2010.

#### 11. Thesis or dissertation

<sup>1</sup>Syahruddin Usman, "*Kinerja* Guru Penddikan Agama Islam pada SMAN dan SMKN Kota Makassar", *Disertasi* (Makassar: PPs UIN Alauddin, 2010), h. 200.

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