

Tunes Of Development: An Alternative Lens To Analyse Development (Study Case: Navicula Band Addresses Environmental And Social Problems In Indonesia)

Khairun Nisa

Faculty of Creative Design and Digital Business, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Surabaya, 60111, khairunnisa@its.ac.id

Received: Click or tap to enter a date.

Reviewed: Click or tap to enter a date.

Published: Click or tap to enter a date.

Copyright ©2020 by the author (et al) and Indonesian Journal of Development Studies (IJDS)
*This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Subject Area : *please choose one*

Abstract [in ENGLISH]

This study aims to describe an alternative approach to analyse development issues by using popular culture as the lens of analysis. Through the analysis of tunes of development, this study argues development should be measured not only through the conventional way of measuring development by economic indicators, primarily measuring GDP (Gross Domestic Products), but also considering culture aspect to achieve a comprehensive measuring of development. Using study case of Navicula Band in its efforts to address environmental and social problems in Indonesia, this study shows an overview about the key to comprehensive development by analysing the society and its culture. This study used qualitative research method and literature review as the data collection technic

Keywords: *Environment, Navicula Band, Tunes Development*

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The discourse of development nowadays has been challenged for its focus towards economic growth. Development is always associated with economic growth and to measure development is mainly based on GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Economy is considered the most important aspect of the development process itself. While other aspects of life such as culture is always excluded in the development discourse. Research and studies nowadays have been trying to see how development should be done by not only primary measure economic growth, but also including culture in development process. Departing from this, this study aims to see development from the other side,

through the lens of popular culture, by analysing study case of Navicula Band in addressing the problem of society and the environmental issues. Popular culture is seen as a tool to understand and respond to social problems that occur in society through messages, that are conveyed through works of art which reflected identity and understanding towards some issues (Maratea and Monahan 2016: 2). Popular culture can be used as an alternative to understand the ways to do development as well as to remake and unmake development by its messages and critiques which are represented in the forms of art towards development. Based on these reasons, I chose the concept of Tunes of Development aiming to understand how popular music can be used as an

alternative to reconceptualize orthodox development discourse, by including popular music as one of the fields which contributes to provide more entry points as its description of complex phenomena in society by using example pop-rock indie band, *Navicula*, addresses environment and social problems in Indonesia since 1996 until now. This study uses qualitative methods to describe cultural analysis in this case music as an instrument in examining development issues. As for the data collection technique used in this study is a literature review.

METHODOLOGY

Evolution of Indie Music as Music Critique in Indonesia

The emergence of indie music in Indonesia began in the 1970s which was marked by the birth of musicians such as Guruh Gipsi, Gang Pegangsaan, God Bless, Giant Step and Super Kid who adopted the western music genre. social issues and struggles have not become important issues in indie music lyrics at that time. (Mardiah 2014). During the period government of Soeharto (New Order 1967-1998), Indonesia government imposed the restriction and censorship policies on various mass media, media broadcasting, television, journalism and literature in order to suppress the anti-government social movement. Even though the censorship policy was implemented, popular music that criticized the government and social issues in Indonesia could still develop because popular music at that time was still considered not to have great power as an anti-government movement. Iwan Fals and Harry Roesli may be notable popular singers who actively voiced criticism of the government and

social issues in Indonesia despite being threatened by censorship and banning by the government at the time. Although they still had to pay attention with the lyrics which contain messages of objection towards government and regime. (Wallach 2002: 12). In 1980s, Iwan fals gave attention towards social issue especially poverty and people deprived from their rights and a pioneer of rock musician as an social activist (Lockard 1998). In 1998, after the end of the Suharto regime, it became a turning point in the development of popular culture and music in Indonesia. Freedom of the press, reformation (Reformasi) and globalization that took place in Indonesia affected the development of media and technology such as internet which became an important factor in the development of popular culture and music in Indonesia (Kartomi 2010). Indie music began to gain popularity in the late 1990s when Pas Band succeeded in releasing albums independently and sold 5,000 copies, which was then followed by the success of Mocca with album sales of 100,000 copies (Mardiah 2014). Entering the late 90s, indie music began to display their lyrics which criticized social issues in Indonesia. some of the indie bands include *Navicula*, *Efek Rumah Kaca*, *Silampukau*, *Banda Neira*, and *Superman is Dead*.

Navicula Shout to Environmental and Social Problems in Indonesia

Navicula became one of the rock-indie bands that actively voiced and criticized the environmental and social problems that occurred in Indonesia since its formation in 1996 until now. *Navicula* is based in Bali and become one of the few bands that uses critical lyrics directly in its every song. (*Navicula* 2018). In 2009, *Navicula* released

Pantai Mimpi (Dream Beach) about the excesses and negative impacts of coastal development in Bali and the threats posed by pesticides to Bali's beautiful fireflies and song of (Mafia Medis) Medical Mafia which can be downloaded for free and contributed to the fundraising campaign through Coin for Prita as a form of support for Prita Mulyasari who was charged with imprisonment on charges of defamation for sending email containing complaints about Omni International Hospital services that were spread viral on social media (Moore 2011). As Gregory stated that "Music is a powerful means of creating a sense of belonging, either to a particular ethnic group or to a place" (Gregory 1997: 131). Navicula's music has succeeded in mobilizing the masses in innovative ways, using social media. what Navicula did, is an important example that the music can be used not only as an entertainment, but also to arouse, awaken, and form a public awareness towards social and environmental issues including how to solve these social and environmental problems which are important parts from development discourse and might be the result of development itself. The dynamics of development such as cultural change, globalisation, commercialisation, the resistance of society, and politics can be articulated through music (Huijsmans 2018)¹ as Polanyi said "the cultural environment risks disintegration in the face of market domination, and to address this, sites of struggle can be considered a protective movement against the primacy of the market episteme" (Polanyi as cited in Dankoff 2011: 258) Therefore,

music can be used as an alternative to understand development discourse comprehensively.

In 2010, Navicula released Metropolitan (Metro-pollutant) song and music video for sounding their critic toward pollution in Jakarta and won the Next Rode Rockers competition and got 23,000 viewers on YouTube at the end of the competition through the internet and social media. Navicula also did several charity concerts to spread the awareness of environmental and social issues. "Konser amal (charity concerts) are a common mode of music activism in Indonesia and often raise monetary support for particular crises" (Moore 2011). Charity concerts is also being effective way to obtain collaborative understanding towards social justice. Charity concerts also can be means to gather thousand people to form social commitment and understanding to the perspective of seeing particular issue (Gamson 1991). Navicula not only succeeded in popularizing their songs and spreading their criticism of environmental and social issues, but also succeeded in increasing the awareness of the Indonesian people, especially the younger generation. Navicula released song Kali Mati (Dead River) about the pollution of the rivers in Indonesia in 2012 (Moore 2012). In the same year, 2012, Navicula released the song Orangutan, the song tells about the condition of orangutans in Indonesia which are endangered due to human activities. music videos uploaded on YouTube attracted the attention of Greenpeace Indonesia's deforestation action team (The Eye of the Tiger), Sawit Watch (anti-palm oil nonprofit), and WALHI (Friends of the Earth Indonesia) who later collaborated to travel

¹ Quoted in Roy Huijsmans' Lecture Making of Development: Tunes of Development, November 2018

to Borneo by using a trail bike. this became the forerunner of Navicula launching a "Tour to Borneo" fundraising campaign through social media Facebook and Twitter, and also held concerts in Bali and Jakarta in order to raise funds for trips to Kalimantan. this campaign managed to raise funds that exceeded the estimated funds, A\$2860. *Kepak Sayap Engrang* Tour is then carried out in Borneo. At same time, Navicula met with Dayak communities who were involved in conflict with mining companies and oil palm plantations in the area facilitated by AMAN (Alliance of Indigenous Peoples Archipelago) (Moore 2012). Until now, Navicula has been continuing to spread awareness of environmental and social issues in Indonesia by creating and releasing songs with conveyed their views towards these two crucial issues. From the activities of Navicula mobilised public and cooperating with NGO and INGO we can analyse the increasing of significance of the celebrity role in the efforts to communicate and mediate poverty and development issues. Furthermore, it is noted that this role has been prominent in the north and the south. (Brockington 2014). This situation implies that the development is an aspect that can be understood and analysed through studying literature, films, and other contemporary forms of representation (Lewis et al 2014).

Culture, Music and Re-thinking Development

In order to get understanding how music can be used to remake and unmake development, first we should analyse the orthodox development and define its premises. There are three premises that development discourse is based: "(a) that development is goal-oriented, (b) that development

has been reduced to the economic and that the goal can therefore be achieved through economic growth, and (c) that the referent in development is conceived of as a rational individual" (Dankoff 2011: 258). Based on these three premises, orthodox development has characteristics; first, development is a process to fulfil a goal that is better than the starting point of development itself (Matthews 2004). It means development has an end, when the goal is achieved. While culture and music that represented experiences of individuals and communities, are dynamics and always changing over the time. This means that culture and music are not considering in development process. Second, the mainly focus of development is economic growth. Culture and music have the small portion or may exclude from development process because development aims to fulfil economic growth. As the consequence, experiences of individuals and communities are excluding from development priorities. Third, rational individual is defined as individuals' knowledge about something and the way to get that knowledge. Orthodox development assumes that individual choice is defining in terms of market oriented and rational choice. It means orthodox development is unable to take into account the changing in society as well as social struggles which are happened in community level (Dankoff 2011: 259). These three premises allow us to see the sense of hegemony as well as identifying that culture and music are invisible in the orthodox development discourse while as clearly be seen by the example of Navicula critique towards environmental and social issues that music can be used to see broaden context of non-market epistemes and lived experiences as an alternative to do, rethink, and unmake development.

“Expressing one’s self musically is an important factor in how one defines oneself and also reflects cultural community identity. Such expression can stand in contrast to the preordained, individualized, and rational thinking person outlined by the hegemonic development discourse because making music is not primarily an economic activity. As such, musical expression is not based on a rational individual identity and can be seen as an act of resistance against the orthodox development identity/mentality. Consideration of the non-rational, which artistic and cultural expression entail, can expand the way we consider development” (Dankoff 2011: 262) Music making is the most fundamental way which can articulate the cultural activity, values and beliefs of the society as well as the expression of human beings (Elliot 1995: 185). “If music is accepted as a cultural activity, then the important role of music (as culture) in influencing social and societal interactions can also be acknowledged” (Dankoff 2011: 262).

Considering that music is being used as a cultural expression and at the same time spreading the expression itself in order to create the same understanding towards specific issue, we can assume that music has possibility to be political relevant and thus can be used to analyse and re-concept development discourse. Karl Polanyi stated “not economic exploitations, as often assumed, but the disintegration of the cultural environment of the victim (that) is then the cause of degradation” (Polanyi 2001: 164). Economic transformations can be understood by examining the cultural changes in society.

CONCLUSION

Based on the case example that is explained in this study: Navicula is using music as an instrument to voice environmental and social issues that occur in Indonesia, it can be identified that music can be used as an expression of culture and at the same time as political expression. although the real impact that might be formed as a result of music utilization as both forms of expression cannot be seen in a real way to changing society, it can be analysed that music as a means of expressing one's knowledge or views on an issue, we can analyse that music also becomes instruments to shape public opinion and social movement. Based on this function, music can be used as a complementary and alternative instrument to see how we understand development, how to re-conceptualize the concept of development and in what ways we must do and do not development. It is the time to change the focus of development that merely on economic growth as an rational choice, but also include popular music as an non-rational choice that can be used to be an alternative of development.

REFERENCES

- Brockington, D. (2014) “The Production and Construction of Celebrity Advocacy in International Development”, *Third World Quarterly*, 35: 1, 88-108, DOI:10.1080/01436597.2014.868987.
- Dankoff, J. (2011) “Toward a Development Discourse Inclusive of Music”, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 36(3), 257-269. Accessed 30 December 2018
<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/23210896>>

- Elliot, D.J. (1995) *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Gamson, W.A. (1991) "Commitment and Agency in Social Movements", *Sociological Forum* 6(1):27-50.
- Gregory, A.H. (1997) *The Roles of Music in Society: The Ethnomusicological Perspective*, in *The Social Psychology of Music*, ed. David Hargreaves and Adrian C. North. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kartomi, M. J. (2010) "Debates and Impressions of Change and Continuity in Indonesia's Musical Arts Since the Fall of Suharto, 1998-2002," *Islam in Southeast Asia*, 378-413.
- Lewis, D., Rodgers, D., & Woolcock, M. (2014) *Popular Representations of Development: Insights from novels, films, television and social media*. London, New York: Routledge
- Lockard, C. A. (1998) *Dance of life: Popular music and politics in Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Maratea, R. J., & Monahan, B. (2016) *Social Problems in Popular Culture*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Mardiah, S.S. (2014) "Perkembangan Band Indie di Indonesia", *Jumpa Online*, Accessed 30 December 2018 <<http://www.jumpaonline.com/kolom/perkembangan-band-indie-di-indonesia>>
- Matthews, S. (2004). Post-development theory and the question of alternatives: a view from Africa. *Third world quarterly*, 25(2), 373-384.
- Moore, R.E. (2011) "'Politrick(s)' and 'Medical Mafia': Rock and Social Justice in Indonesia", *Conference of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, Australia/New Zealand*. Accessed 30 December 2018 <https://www.academia.edu/7025224/_Politrick_s_and_Medical_Mafia_Rock_and_Social_Justice_in_Indonesia>
- Moore, R.E. (2012) "Rock Music and Social Activism on the Internet "Inside Indonesia" Accessed 30 December 2018 <<https://www.insideindonesia.org/rock-music-and-social-activism-on-the-internet-2>>
- Navicula (2018). About Band. Accessed 30 December 2018 <<http://www.naviculamusic.com/biography/>>
- Polanyi, K. (2001). *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Times*, 2nd ed. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Wallach, J. (2002) *Modern Noise and Ethnic Accents: Indonesian Popular Music in the Era of Reformasi*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.