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**CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND IMAGINED COMMUNITIES:
A CASE STUDY OF YOGYAKARTA CREATIVE CITY**

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Abstract

The creative industry in Yogyakarta, specifically, the independent film industry, has been taking a prime role in promoting controversial films that encourages the communities to think with their own notions of national identity in Indonesia, since the post-reformation era. As such, the independent film community exudes its own culture of imagined community (on national identity), which resides within the multi-faceted supply chain of the film/creative industry community. This creative industry and its cultural producers, actively builds a media agenda on national identity discourse, such that the industry, acts as catalyst for the diverse communities to experience the 'sameness' and evolved 'sameness', of their own mental/emotional construction of national identity(ies), and in this process, questions the notion of social cohesion and societal well-being, and sustainability within the country. Based on a research on Yogyakarta creative city case study, this article will: 1) describe the extant and nature of imagined communities, on national identity(ies) amongst representatives of the societies, 2) explain the role of the independent film community in the nature of such imagined communities, through its cultural production services, namely, the films and related cultural productions within the creative industry supply chain, and 3) evaluate the myriad and multiple (national) identities, which are being negotiated/propagated or even sidelined/submerged.

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Keywords: Creative industry, national identity, independent film, creative city, imagined communities, cultural production.



1. Introduction

Yogyakarta was known as a creative city since 2015. The growth of Indonesia's independent films and creative industry began in 2009, yet, its beginnings are evident since 1999 (the reformation era). Its creative industry and its cultural producers actively builds a media agenda on national identity discourse, that the industry act as a catalyst for the community members to experience the 'sameness' on what it means with regards to the mental/emotional construction of national identity. The independent films of Yogyakarta have taken a prime the role in 'sharing the sameness' among communities, when compared to other media. Furthermore, the tangible outputs (films) of cultural production in Yogyakarta, manifest as an intervention in the process of producing meaning. The creative industry and its freedom to promote controversial films points towards a cultural production process allows constant reshaping and redefinition of the notion of national identity

National identity, as a political and shared experience, should be considered as one form of collective identity (Phillips, 2002; Cui & Adams, 2002; Maxwell, 2006; Hrytsenko, 2008; Vedina & Baumane, 2008; Vanderwerf & Enoch, 2009). Anderson argues that nationalism and nations are constructed (Anderson, 2006), and the sense of national identity is imagined by citizens as part of the national community (Powell & Steel, 2011). Based on Anderson's (2006) perspective, nationality occurred because of sameness; Anderson explains that the sense of national identity is imagined and is expected to be achieved, amongst the community members. The agenda of the notion of national identity should spread as discourse materials that make community members aware of the existence of one group and another. Anderson proposes that the print media and publishing as the catalysts in sharing the sameness (Anderson, 2006). However, the current digital and information technology development is shifting the role of print media to visual and audio form (Appadurai, 1996; Hansen, n.d; Beck, 2011; Baumgartel, 2011). Since the cultural elements become a significant part of the forming of national identity, the creative industry is playing a role that is as crucial as the cultural producers to other forms of media (Carter, 2008), such as film, TV program, and publishing.

A film is a cultural product and has great potential to create the term national identity since film allows people to share their experiences (Holland, 2012; Carter, 2008; Babran, 2008). National identity is portrayed in film analysis through the use of national symbols represented in the films such as the flag, territory, name, national anthem, uniforms (Holland, 2012); historical memory (Berry, 2016; Trivundza, 2010); social, economic and cultural condition (Raju, 2016); religion, race, economic, culture and politics (Maxwell, 2005); and national myth (Khatib, 2006). Film has a narrative that builds an engagement with the audience, which could lead to the audiences' perceptions towards certain agenda and discourse (Sasaki, 2014; Wingstedt, 2010; Szabo, 2010). Moreover, in the developing countries, films have become one of few remaining sites left that are more likely not to be affected by the elite politic agenda (Isaacs & Polese, 2015). Through films, political identity, hence national identity, could be negotiated by the community members (Trivundza, 2010; Maxwell, 2006).

Accordingly, this paper aims to explore the influence of the creative industry and their extant, upon the national identity, during the post reformation era. The paper is focus on the cultural production in relations with the discourse formulation that defined as the set of individuals and organizations. In addition, the independent film community exudes its own culture of imagined community (on national identity). This

culture, which is inherently residing within the multi-faceted supply chain of the film/creative industry community, ought to be further understood.

2. Problem Statement

Indonesian government developed its political notion of national identity with the formulation of national symbols such as the national flag, national language, and national anthem (Amir, 2013; Murtisari, n.d); the national motto: unity in diversity (Adams, 2002; Jones, 2005); and the national ideology: *Pancasila* (Budianta, 2000; Budiman, 2011). *Pancasila* was built by the founding fathers (Soekarno and Hatta) in order to unite the multicultural and multiethnic societies. *Pancasila* represents Indonesia's national identity for a society that is diverse in culture, ethnic and religion (Jones, 2005) and hence forth, became the basis for unity of the society in Indonesia (Budianta, 2000).

In the New Order era (1966-1998), *Pancasila* was interpreted by the Soeharto's government as a political ideology which resulted with defying the essence of its origins which was meant to uphold the pluralistic notion upon which the nation was built (Kitley, 2000). As a result, *Pancasila* was used to flush out communism, propagate Javanese ethnic and culture domination, discriminate against the ethnic Chinese, and to curtail Islamic extremism practices (Heryanto, 2015; Jones, 2005; Adams, 2002; Amir, 2013; Budianta, 2000; Budiman, 2011; Rakhmani, 2014; Turner & Allen, 2007; Urban, 2013). It is during the Reformation era (1998-2009) that the society was left in a trauma and disassociated their lives from *Pancasila*, to the point of rejecting *Pancasila*. The anti-*Pancasila* movement led to the elimination of *Pancasila* implementation in education system, popular arts and government policy and much discussion was revolving around the nation's identity in crisis (Budianta, 2000; Jones, 2005; Rakhmani, 2014). In the post reformation era (2009-now days), sentiments and conflicts on religion, ethnic and culture, spread all over different cities and islands in Indonesia, and *Pancasila* did not become a reference point for the society's day-to-day living. Yet, beginning 2014, ethnic conflicts between Muslims and Chinese flared, such that they became a national issue, and were popularly known as *kasus Ahok* (in reference to Ahok's unsuccessful attempt in his bid for the post of Jakarta governor in 2016), when incidents of rejection of regional leaders (of different ethnic/religion) in Indonesia, flared during 2015 to 2016, in Jakarta, Pontianak, Medan, Yogyakarta and Manado.

In this current context of post-reformation era that the notion of multiple (national) identities need proper understanding. The creative city can be used as a platform to disseminate ideas about the nation, thus, formulate the concept of national identity within multicultural and multiethnic society. Yogyakarta, known as mini Indonesia, due to the history of Yogyakarta as a student city and the meeting place of various ethnicities from all corners of the archipelago. Yogyakarta also is a deeply educational and cultural city. Politically, as the city region, it is, unlike anywhere else in the country, the only place still run feudally (Monarchy) within a democratic country. On the other hand, Yogyakarta is a cheap city to live in, which together with its cultural assets and friendliness, makes it a place that attracts artists and students. Yogyakarta is a mixture of its various natural, historical, cultural and social elements that make it such an intriguing space, fomenting much of the dynamic of the society. In 2009, Yogyakarta appointed as one of the creative cities in Indonesia, which can be used as a platform in understanding the process of ideas dissemination of national identity formulation. In this respect, the creative industry products (in this

study, especially, independent film), can understand how discourses about the nation and national identity are promoted. Independent films are a medium to promote the discourses of the notion of national identity.

3. Research Questions

In order to present substantive findings, this paper has delineated the following research questions:

1. With regards to national identity, what is the extant of the existence of ‘imagined communities’, amongst the society of Yogyakarta, since the post-reformation era?
2. What is the nature of potentially myriad multiple (national) identities, which have been negotiated/propagated or even sidelined/submerged, since the post-reformation era?
3. What are the influences of the creative industry and their extant, upon the myriad multiple (national) identities?

4. Purpose of the Study

4.1. Theoretical Purposes

There are at least four theoretical contributions which are expected to be discovered from this proposed study. First, this study will look at the understanding of the notion of Indonesia national identity from the perspective of the concept of imagined communities. Second, this research will study the understanding of national identity within the concept of imagined communities, as portrayed in independent films. Third, this study will contribute to the methodology of analyzing national identity in independent films. Fourth, the study will analyze the concept of national identity in post reformation era (2009-2017).

4.2. Practical Purpose

Understanding the manifestation of Indonesia identity on independent film aims to give a better portrayal of the idea of national identity constructed by the society. Furthermore, this study focuses on independent films, which has better penetration than mainstream films; hence, they are able to convey the discourse of national identity better to include remote areas in Indonesia. Thus, the government could understand more and develop better and suitable policy regarding the issue of national stability and development.

In addition, this study intends to recommend inputs for the government to facilitate the development of independent films as part of Indonesia creative industry. The understanding of the creative industry as cultural producers will be realized through the concept of cultural production. Within the cultural production investigation, we can understand the process of discourse making as well as the elements which influence it. Therefore, we can further understand the role of cultural producers in forming the discourse of national identity. The description, of the process, will contribute to the development of cultural production model in the Indonesian mass media industry.

5. Research Methods

The research design for this study is using case study analysis through qualitative methods. The data generation was conducted through in-depth interview. This study will examine Yogyakarta creative city, as part of creative industry. Yogyakarta creative city regard as a cultural producers that has roles is forming the national identity discourse. In this study the sampling strategy used is the purposive sampling. This sampling allows the researcher to choose the participants that fit the needs of the phenomena under study, thereby providing the knowledge necessary to conduct through research to yield useful data (Creswell, 2007). The sample will be determined based on the suitability to the sample characteristic. This study is choosing a post reformation era during 2009 – 2017, because during this era government's program in Indonesia creative industry was starting to develop. In the other hand, Indonesia creative industry sets by government as the alternative industry of Indonesia cultural and economic development (Simatupang, 2012). Indonesia independent film plays important part in Indonesia creative industry program to strengthen and promote Indonesia national identity.

There are several steps that will be involved in this in-depth interview. In first step are include identity stakeholders who will be involved, identity what information is needed and from whom, list stakeholders to be interviewed, and ensure research will follow international and national ethical standards. Second step, develop instruments, consist of develop an interview protocol, develop an interview guide that lists the questions or issues to be explored during the interview and includes an informed consent form, and translate guide into local language (if necessary). Third step is build knowledge on interview technique. Fourth step, collect data, are step up interviews with stakeholders, seek informed consent of the interviewee, if interviewee has consented then conduct the interview, summarize key data immediately following the interview, and verify information given in interviews as necessary. Fifth step is analyzes data that is transcribes and/or review data and analyze all the interview data. Last, the sixth step, that is writes report, solicit feedback from interviewees and program stakeholders, revise, and disseminate to interviewees, program stakeholders, funders, and the community as appropriate.

This study interviewed 46 relevant respondents. The respondents interviewed were from three communities which are the creative industry group (film directors, film producers, film distributors, film curator, journalist, researcher, actresses, film festivals organizer, Yogyakarta Department of culture), the minority group (Chinese ethnic, LGBTQ+, Papuan, and radical Islamic organization) and younger generations group (university students). The data analysis will be conducted simultaneously with the data collection and with theory development so that process will helps the researcher to understand and to shape the study. The in-depth interview data analyses using the Maxqda software. The software helped to sort the frequently comment, sort the similarity and differences, and develops the open coding, and category.

6. Findings

6.1. The Creative City of Yogyakarta

Yogyakarta is one of Indonesia creative city. The creative city of Yogyakarta known in gained national and international awards as the best province in supporting the local film industry, producing the most acclaimed film directors, producers and actresses in Indonesian film industry and producing award-

winning films at national and international film festivals. Yogyakarta displaying the film industry developments and has the potential as a center for alternative film industries in Indonesia. The large number of creative people within Yogyakarta support the development of healthy and balanced film industry ecosystem. Not only relying on the potential of the people who are involved in the industry alone, but by completing it through the film industry infrastructure of Yogyakarta and creating a healthy market, by offsetting the role of government agencies.

The creative products is a carrier of an elites certain discourses, and since the products are rather easily perceived in the community, its associated with a certain identity. The products strongly shared the sameness of a sense of national identity. The various status of Yogyakarta as the education, culture and tourist city brought diversity in the society of Yogyakarta. This diverse society background enhance the richness of the discourse that could represent in the creative products. The experience of diversity in everyday life enriches the discourse of creative industry elites about their imagination with regards to national identity. The discourse, furthermore, also influenced by the creative industry ecosystem.

Yogyakarta creative industry grew out of the existence of communities that have roots among young people. The atmosphere of the city develop the best environment to the growth of creative community, thus, the community of creative industry in Yogyakarta growing rapidly. The environment will lead to the certain habit of the society, that in Yogyakarta an artist forced to continue to be productive and produce the best work of arts, because the atmosphere of this city always gave birth to new artists. The condition of Yogyakarta creative industry shows the synergy, cycle and ecosystem of Indonesia creative industry. The government support and the solid communities within its creative industry develops the fluid discourse within the idea of national identity.

6.2. Extant and Nature of Imagined Communities, on National Identity(ies) Amongst Representatives of the Societies

The idea of Imagined communities amongst each of the group is differ due to the background and experience of the group. In the creative industry group, the practice of government in promoting *Pancasila*, strongly influence the respondent's opinion, specifically the New Order government. The frequently comments indicated the community discourses on national identity are not fully relates with the authority defined national identity such as *Pancasila*, language or nation's symbols, however, more broadly associated with local culture, mother language, the national figure and the diversity of Indonesia society. The less attachment on the authority defined national identity caused by bad experiences in previous government, lack of state presence in conflicts that occur in society and the decline of community trust in central government. The respondents also mentioned that the form of Yogyakarta Monarchy government is the major cause of the city environment stability, and the *Pancasila* values go hand in hand with the Islam and Javanese culture values. The group seems to mention the Monarchy as a substitute to *Pancasila*. Some of the respondents also noted that theirs awareness of *Pancasila* as the nation's ideology build as a result form the doctrine of New Order government. Therefore, the respondents mention that they were starting to re-questioning the role of *Pancasila* in Indonesia's national identity formulation. The

respondents underline the unsuccessful implementation of *Pancasila* values in the daily life, which according to them, indicated the government failure in develops and implements the laws.

In addition to bearing the title of cultural city, Yogyakarta is also predicated as a city of education and tourism city. Hence, that not only the city's cultural factors that contribute to pluralism and tolerance in the society, but also the factors of education and tourism. Even so, the culture still gets a large portion of the diversity created in the city of Yogyakarta. The presence of migrants from outside is of course accompanied by the presence of diverse cultures from their home regions. The creative industry actively builds a media agenda on national identity discourse, the industry act as a catalyst for the community members to experience the 'sameness' on what it means with regards to the mental/emotional construction of national identity. The discourse developed within the creative industry community through their personal experiences. In the discussion we can see that the frequently comments indicated the community discourse on national identity are not fully relates with the authority defined national identity such as *Pancasila*, language or nation's symbols, however, more broadly associated with local culture, mother language, the national figure and the diversity of Indonesia society. The less attachment on the authority defined national identity, like mentioned by the respondents, caused by bad experiences in previous government, lack of state presence in the conflicts that occur in the society and the decline of community trust in central government.

On the other hand, different with the creative industry group, the idea of imagined communities in regards with the notion of national identity amongst younger generations group seems has strongly attachment to the *Pancasila* as the authority defined national identity. The gap of ages and the lack of experience of the New Order government, makes young generation group strongly believe that *Pancasila* is an appropriate concept of identity for Indonesia amid its diversity. They also believe in the Sultan's figure as a unifying figure of diversity in Yogyakarta, as well as a guarantee of tolerance life in Yogyakarta.

Meanwhile, amongst the minority group, several early comments during the interviews indicated that respondents had an expression of disappointment to the government and the society, and as the discussions continued and evolved, all the respondents interviewed continued to report the acts of discrimination experienced in relations with the cultural ethnicity issues. The research then had dominant responses that describing the form of discrimination on land ownership, the opportunities for education and employment, and access to politics. Moreover, the comments also noted the treatment differences of government policy to certain group, the termination of activities, acts of violence and prejudice against certain group.

The increased tendency to think about the decreasing of Sultan power in Yogyakarta often related to the unfair laws, the omission of discrimination cases and the prejudice within the political interest. For some, the event will reduce the sense of attachment to the governing government, for others might just enhance their sense of defending their leaders and city. The freedom of expressions in post reformation era, the emerge of radical Islamic organizations, the lack of government firmness in supervise the radical mass organizations, the Yogyakarta Monarchy government policy which againts the central government policy and the society prejudice to the different ethnicity and cutlture all emerged in the interviews in support of the idea in ethnic and belief sentiment. The practice of government roles (in this case especially Yogyakarta Monarchy government), and the society prejudice includes the radical Islamic organizations appears to be

a strong trigger for the respondents, in their concerns about the principles of *Pancasila*. There are also indications from the respondent interviews that the racism and discrimination events tend to be left unresolved by the Sultan.

The experiences affected the way on how they form their sense of attachment to the nation. The description of negative events in relations within the issues of religions, ethnicity and culture, the negative prejudice towards the presence of Sultan and the form of Yogyakarta government monarchy system, and the sense of attachment to land of birth, unfortunately, suggest the unpleasant idea of the notion of national identity. Even though they still has an awareness of the importance of *Pancasila*, they critics on the implementation that relates within the law interpretation of the governing government. The disappointments notes to the governing government frequently said from the interviewed, added on their description of the sense of attachment to the nation, which mostly describe the physically term such as land of birth, shows the decreasing of communities attachment to the nation, especially to the governing government.

6.3. The Cultural Production of Yogyakarta Creative City

The creative city is an entity that developed through well design cultural production, with a strong presence of creative industries, lead by the community. In response the question on the atmosphere of Yogyakarta creative city, frequently comments within the respondents are the cultural character of the city, the creative people and film site. The long history of Yogyakarta in art and Javanese culture, the Monarchy system, the society profession that is mostly artists and the community habit made the best environment in the development of the creative city. The principle of freedom of expressions in the post-reformation era, encourage the diversity of issues represent in the film. The filmmaker could express their thought honestly in the form of work of arts. The atmosphere of Yogyakarta creative city then will develop the cultural production productivity to created the desired discourse on imagined communities in regards with national identity.

The post-reformation freedom of expression influences how the creative products are made and develop. In Yogyakarta creative city, the status of culture city, build a productive environment since mostly of the society profession are the creative peoples. The Yogyakarta special region has special regulations, which allows the city government to support the community more advances. The presence of special fund which are issued by government, made the productivity increase, the realization of adequate infrastructure, and made the products known by the mainstream industry. The overall funding itself, divided into two funding system, the international funding and government funding. The comments also mentioned that the funding is not interfere with the content of the creative products, thus there are sensitive issues represent which also fund by the government. In the creative people parts, the environment builds the unique society habit and close engagement with the government. However, the freedom of expression also arouses the radical mass organization, which in many events, noted, as a party that hold back the creativity of the creative process in the industry. The condition mentioned added by the overlapping policy and laws and the unsuitable regulations within the creative industry.

7. Conclusion

In summary, national identity within the imagined communities concept represent in Indonesian films closely related with the political, economy and society changing. The manifestation of national identity in films also build around the external factors within its role as the catalyst in the process of sharing the common national identity sense among the nation members. Amongst the respondents, for a substantial number of respondents, *Pancasila* has been understood as an nation's ideology, nation's philosophy or the guidance in Indonesia's society daily living that unite the diversity amongst Indonesian. This occurred often because the concept of *Pancasila*, noted as the founding fathers formulation in fulfill the necessity amongst the diversity of Indonesian. However, other respondents said that most of the principles of Pancasila is politicized, especially the first principles that always bring religious conflict. The misuse of Pancasila during the New Order reigns traumatized the society, making it difficult for the proper implementation of the community. in order to fulfill the truly meaning of Pancasila implementation nowadays, both the society and government must fight against the ghost of the New Order. Meanwhile, some of others respondents mentioned that the discourse of *Pancasila* should not be rigid, but must be flexible to keep up with the society form changing.

The respondents noted that the value of Javanese culture, and the Monarchy system of Yogyakarta said to be the major cause of the stability in Yogyakarta city. The comments noted that Yogyakarta still categorized as the tolerance city, even though there are several comments on Yogyakarta's conflict, however, is not the massive conflict which causing riots. Most of the respondents noted that Pancasila values goes hand in hand with the religion and Javanese culture values. the respondents noted that the value of Javanese culture, and the Monarchy system of Yogyakarta said to be the major cause of the stability in Yogyakarta city. The comments noted that Yogyakarta still categorized as the tolerance city, even though there are several comments on Yogyakarta's conflict, however, is not the massive conflict which causing riots. Most of the respondents noted that Pancasila values goes hand in hand with the religion and Javanese culture values. Therefore, most of the respondents comments various answer due to their sense of attachment to the nation within the imagined communities concept, yet, the frequently comments are noted the local issues, local culture, local language, the diversity, and national figure.

Furthermore, the respondents also came from various ages as age factor became important since the experience within different government era will lead different idea of the notion of national identity. The past experience on government role, will impacted to the extant of the existence of imagined communities, amongst the society of Yogyakarta, since the post-reformation era. In addition, the generation difference is also influenced by the use of technology and internet intervention, and with regards to technology development represented by film, it's can reveal how community adopt different standpoints when their selfhood is not yet confirmed, and as such, keeps altering.

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