



Dangdut Music as a Realization of Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy and Social Relations Between Countries

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Abstract

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Music is a means of cultural diplomacy that has become the center of scientific attention around the world. This study aims to describe the Indonesian government's efforts to strengthen cultural diplomacy on international scale through dangdut music which is assisted by the development of the digital age, namely through TV programs and sports tournaments throughout Asia. Dangdut Academy Asia and the Asian Games are one of the means to promote dangdut on the international scene, especially Asia. The theory of popular culture and cultural diplomacy is used in this study to explain how dangdut music packaged in TV programs can influence people's lives in a positive way.

Keywords: *Music, Cultural diplomacy, Dangdut Music, Dangdut Academy Asia*

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INTRODUCTION

Dangdut music is a type of popular music from Indonesia which has many fans and masses of its own. The statement made by Pilliang in the Minawati journal, namely that pop culture is adapted to a lifestyle (life style) in using space, time, and objects (certain groups or people) that are consumptive. This consumptive nature ultimately forms a lifestyle, including dangdut music enthusiasts who cannot let go of dangdut in their daily lives.¹ This is proven by the ease with which we can find this type of music in residential areas, markets, stalls, and even city transportation (Minawati, 2016).

The International Relations Study Program has defined diplomacy as a process of communication carried out between international relations actors in an effort to achieve an interest either in a certain agreement or a common goal. In the current era of globalization, diplomacy has become increasingly diverse, one of which is cultural diplomacy, which is included in Multitrack Diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy itself is considered effective in achieving goals because its implementation can take place in any situation, whether in a state of peace, crisis, conflict or war. This cultural relationship can involve two or more countries that become close or establish a cooperative relationship, with that being the case that is currently causing many countries to make more efforts to improve their cultural relations so that they can become an effective diplomatic tool. Culture in Indonesia has a variety of cultures that are recognized by foreign societies, such as the culture of so many traditional dances, including the culture of Indonesian dangdut music (Fitriyadi & Alam, 2020).

Dangdut music is one of the most popular types of musical culture in Indonesia, where dangdut music at first appeared to be underestimated and considered a type of folk music that was mediocre and tended to go down. Whereas

in this day and age, the condition of dangdut songs or music is that almost all Indonesians like dangdut music rhythms, not only Indonesians, even the international community currently likes dangdut music. So with the 2018 ASIAN GAMES in Indonesia, which has promoted dangdut music culture, it has become a musical culture that is not only national, but has even become international. At this time dangdut music has become international dangdut music that is well known by outsiders. And also at this time, almost all of them are also on programs such as on Radio, TV, and events outside of this media, every day dangdut music is on programs in Indonesia. For example, currently in Indonesia there is often an event or audition called Dangdut Academy Asia, whose participants are attended by various countries in Asia, and the judges are also from various countries in Asia, such as Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore (Rahayu, 2018).

This research is expected to be a tool in understanding the theory of cultural diplomacy, especially dangdut music which can be useful for the public in understanding and addressing the meaning and purpose of a television program broadcast.

METHODS

The explanatory method is used in this study, which explains how dangdut music can be used as cultural diplomacy by the Indonesian government. The data collection technique uses literature study, from internet media, journals, and news related to dangdut music as Indonesian cultural diplomacy.

In simple terms, the theoretical framework used in this research includes culture and cultural diplomacy. Popular culture is to say that this popular culture is a culture that is widely liked or favored by many people. And this popular culture is also no doubt, such a quantitative index will meet the book approval, CD and DVD sales. And then this popular culture has the difficulty, the difficulty maybe we can agree on a picture of something that is just culture, we might find that it is widely liked or liked by many people including so many that it is almost useless as a conceptual definition of popular culture. Despite these issues, what is clear is that any definition of popular culture must include a quantitative dimension. Popular pop culture seems to demand it. What is also clear, however, is that on its own, a quantitative index is not sufficient to provide an adequate definition of popular culture. Such an enumeration almost certainly includes the officially recognized "high culture", which in terms of book and record sales and audiences for classic television dramatizations, can rightly claim to be "popular" in this sense (Bennet, 1980).

The conception of cultural diplomacy has several understandings. Some academics place cultural diplomacy as part of public diplomacy where culture is a national identity that can be a positive bridge to build mutual understanding. A positive image and mutual understanding will be a support for the state in obtaining its national interests. This is in line with the concept of Soft Power where diplomacy is positioned as a tool to serve the national interests of a country, be it political interests or economic interests (Jr., 2004).

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The Relationship between Dangdut Culture and Social Relations

The mutual connection between social, cultural, economic and political networks in society towards dangdut music in the country is undeniable. Dangdut is Indonesian folk music. This type of music is like being born from the people's conscience which is expressed in their daily lives. Therefore, it is not surprising that every time there is a dangdut music performance, wherever it is, it is always flooded with spectators. If you look closely, there is no age limit among the audience who are present to witness each dangdut music performance. All walks of life attended every show that was held. This proves that dangdut music is very easy to digest. Adults watch dangdut music and can understand it, children also watch it and can understand it.

The lyrics of dangdut songs which contain verses of romance, tragedy or domestic life, apart from being easy to grasp, are also very close to everyday life. The music is also pleasant to hear and the rhythm stimulates the movement to dance. Dangdut musicians tell a common story about dangdut, which applies to many types of popular music. While the production and circulation of dangdut is felt to be heavily controlled by the powerful and manipulative music industry, at the same time dangdut represents the aspirations and desires of the people, the sea of the majority of Indonesian citizens (Weintraub, 2010).

In dangdut, the role of rocking or dancing is like the spearhead besides the drum which is a characteristic. Dangdut song lyrics also tend to have satirical tendencies. For contemporary dangdut songs, these verses tend to be sensual, adjusting to the market share that many people are interested in today's dangdut songs. The poetry and lyrics of the dangdut song are considered by some groups to be able to represent the universal values that exist in society in detail. The universal value in question is the inclusion of everyday idioms in the life of the general public that have never been touched by other types of music (Muttaqin, 2006).

Held's (2000) first concept connection, namely the emergence of interconnections between social, cultural, economic, and political networks in society that can cross a national border in dangdut music cultural diplomacy, one of which can be seen from the Dangdut Academy Asia (DAA) event, because in the program is the largest dangdut music singer talent competition event in Asia with participants from six countries in the Asian region, such as: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, and Timor Leste (Heid, 2000).

The many and varied participants make this program feel different and also from the Dangdut Academy Asia program this does not only provide entertainment shows, but can provide broader knowledge such as culture starting from language, arts, customs, special foods from the country - D'academy Asia participating countries to the audience.

Dangdut Culture as Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy is a very interesting and important thing in the world of International Relations. Cultural diplomacy is not carried out in a government-to-government mechanism but rather emphasizes government-to-community relations and the most important is community-to-community relations. Cultural diplomacy is considered as a tool to show the level of civilization of a nation. Someone who has paid attention to something or the culture of a particular country, then a deep curiosity will arise about the country that has that interest. Triyono believes that cultural, artistic and cultural diplomacy makes a positive contribution

in creating world peace. Triyono coined the motto "a million friends and zero enemies" through relations between communities known as "people contact" and can be further intertwined, so that culture is seen as more influential than by using military force.

In this regard, the Government of Indonesia, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, has established ten Indonesian cultural centers abroad in 2012 called Rumah Budaya Indonesia (RBI). This policy was born from the awareness of the importance of the existence of national culture abroad. RBI has three functions namely cultural expression, cultural learning, and cultural promotion. RBI as a platform helps the Indonesian government to synergize cultural diplomacy (across ministry sectors). Then, in order to expand the reach of promoting Indonesian culture abroad, in 2017 the Ministry of Education and Culture decided to establish an additional nine new Indonesian Cultural Houses so that currently all Embassies of the Republic of Indonesia that have Education and Culture Attaches have Indonesian Cultural Houses.

Even though the Ministry of Education and Culture has several cultural centers abroad, Indonesia's foreign policy in the field of culture still needs to be improved. So far, the activities of the Indonesian cultural center have been limited to short-term cultural events. Sustainable activities should be prioritized to be implemented even though they require a long time. In other words, overseas RBIs should strive to stimulate local people's interest and curiosity about Indonesia (Fitriyadi & Alam, 2020).

Dangdut Academy Asia 2 is a dangdut singer competition television program whose participants come from six countries in Asia, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Thailand and Timor Leste. This program does not only present a dangdut singer competition, but also aims to introduce Indonesian culture, bring a good name and give a positive image of Indonesia in the eyes of other nations.

The Dangdut Academy Asia 2 variety show program not only packs dangdut music into a classier appearance that aims to increase dangdut's popularity on the international stage, but has also become part of Indonesia's public diplomacy activities through the cultural sector by displaying various cultural elements in it. This cultural diplomacy is basically not only related to popular culture, but also other aspects of Indonesia, such as traditional culture, tourism to various Indonesian specialties (Futri, Mahzuni, & Rahmat, 2018).

CONCLUSION

Dangdut is a discursive space for mediating various social meanings about poverty, unemployment, infidelity, sex, and drunkenness. The appearance of several dangdut music programs on television on an international scale, such as the Dangdut Academy Asia and the 2018 Asian Games Opening Ceremony, has allowed dangdut music to become a source of Indonesian cultural diplomacy internationally.

In the context of cultural diplomacy through dangdut music, the Government in this case has made efforts to introduce dangdut music to the international world through formal and informal channels. Through the Diaspora informal channel, the government really hopes that the (informal) diaspora will

introduce dangdut to the international world at events at the Indonesian Embassy or Attache by donating dangdut music to just sing and joged, or bringing in dangdut artists to entertain diaspora who are living in the country.

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