

The Struggle For The Emergence of The Creative Industry Movement In Indonesia Through Citayam Fashion Week: What Mass Media Says

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Article

This article aims to map the mass media's framing of the CFW phenomenon, from its inception in mid-2022 to August 2023. This article uses a discourse analysis method, using news coverage data related to CFW. The CFW phenomenon has attracted attention from the general public, business people, social media influencers, and the government. This phenomenon began with young people who came from the buffer areas of Jakarta to the Sudirman district—the city center—to gather and wear identical and 'eccentric' clothes. The mass media play a vital role in constructing and framing CFW and disseminating it which brought more people every day. It also made many parties participate in commodifying CFW. In this regard, many people consider CFW to be synonymous with the Harajuku phenomenon, in terms of the fashion displayed and the role of the mass media. In addition, the emphasis on the element of 'creativity' in fashion used in CFW can be considered as a potential form of the government's creative economy policy, but it is not. This study found that the CFW's framing in mass media is dominated by three main discourses; (1) freedom of expression, (2) creative economy potential, and (3) class conflict and politicization.

Keywords: CFW, discourse analysis, freedom of expression, Creative Economy, class conflict and politicization

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INTRODUCTION

In the rise of digital age, pop culture has become more accessible and inclusive. Encouraged by the spirit of diversity, the latest development of the genesis of popular culture happens in a more spontaneous way. This is what reflects from “Citayam Fashion Week” or CFW, a street-themed fashion show which was initiated by teenagers—who mostly if not all—come from the area surrounding Indonesia’s capital city of Jakarta. They were packing up the street around the Dukuh Atas, an area close to the very iconic street of Sudirman as they did a catwalk with a colourful and hippies’ style on. Citayam itself is one of the areas of the sub-urban. (Antara News, 2022).

It’s during a significant span of time in the middle of 2022, Citayam Fashion Week (CFW) had successfully taken a spotlight from the public eye. At the very beginning of CFW bloom, CFW were—by many—considered as a very genuine platform of expression, especially for the youngsters. Moreover, it was also seen to be potential for generating creative economy, primarily for the low budget fashion industry. However, this sort of inclusivity spirit oftentimes confronted by a harsher tone with more of classist sentiment. CFW due to the impromptu and openness nature has been associated with image as a stage for “common people” and budget fashionistas. Nevertheless, it was not immune to any attempt of commodification from politization to commercialization. Thus, CFW disclose a very complex dynamics of social fragmentation especially when it comes to conflict of class.

After tainted by several attempts of commercialization—mostly by celebrities—CFW was also hindered by the government not only through neglect but also by over underestimating it through a very simplified statement. Later after pass the heyday, CFW was seen to be inconvenient for public activities, such as causing traffic jam and overcrowd. The government even threw an absurd allegation of CFW calling it was potential for the gathering of LGBT. Despite the recognition for a genuine public sphere and expression for CFW at the very beginning, a comprehensive approach to harness CFW’s economic and socio-political potential has been absence. Thus, the success of CFW in getting so much attention in fact didn’t contribute positively for the CFW’s own sustainability.

In the case in China, the world’s largest exporter of creative goods, which is also a developing country, has received a lot of criticism for its creative industries. The criticism is mainly related to the government’s calculation and inclusion of creative goods because there is only a little distinction between the creative production and mass-reproduction of so-called creative goods, particularly in the design segment. This indicates that the term ‘creative’ in the creative economy does not directly mean that there is an original creative process involved in designing products (Beukelaer, 2014). Through case studies in several countries, we can see that there are differences between each government and country in translating their creative economy to their creative industries which, mostly, are expected to be a form of development agenda effort.

This view eventually brings us to a more systematic process behind the rise of pop culture as a global phenomenon because pop culture appears to be significantly driven by how the discourse revolving around it is directed—especially by policymakers. For example, the Harajuku movement in Japan, which the Japanese Government has supported in a long-standing effect both discursively and technically through “Japan Cool” movement (Heng,

2017). Moreover, discourses about how pop culture can drive fashion creativity and economy have been oriented towards the Harajuku phenomenon. Harajuku is a station located between Shinjuku and Shibuya that has now developed into a fashion district filled with shops, restaurants, and many events. Harajuku has become a place for fashionable people, especially young people, who show off their fashion to each other thus creating new trends. The influence of Harajuku fashion, as the most unique form of Japanese culture, has also penetrated internationally.

The popularity and spread of Harajuku fashion discourse is also heavily influenced by the media. The influence of social networking services (SNS) is one that shapes Harajuku's image framing towards youth. The landscape of Harajuku has also been commoditized by several media outlets, one of the most significant is the fashion magazine KERA. The magazine photographed and distributed photographs of fashionable people from the streets of Harajuku, making them as their free models. The unique fashion of the models in the magazine encourages young readers to come to Harajuku and buy clothes worn by Harajuku street models. In addition, the photos in the magazine also make readers believe that there are indeed many people with unique and fashionable clothes in Harajuku so that the public is also present in Harajuku with unique clothes to get the opportunity to appear and be in the public spotlight in magazines or SNS. The representation and framing of Harajuku by the mass media motivate the public to consume Harajuku fashion. Thus, through the process of framing and dissemination as well as value addition, Harajuku is commoditized (Nakao, 2016).

Harajuku's increasing fashion consumption along with the number of people who are 'eaten' by the discourses in the mass media is also parallel to the development of the fashion industry, especially youth fashion. Harajuku's youth fashion industry is said to be the best in the world in terms of quality and quantity (Kawasaki, 2007). Along with this and the current of globalization, the original culture and creativity of Harajuku is increasingly challenged by the existence of global capitalism—able to dilute the uniqueness of Harajuku culture and identity. The influx of global brands that can offer cheaper prices also makes it difficult for local boutiques—which include SMEs—to compete (Katzenberg, 2022). In addition, mass media can also reduce the uniqueness of Harajuku's identity because it is easily plagiarized by people around the world. One of the most significant examples regarding to that case is the phenomenon of Citayam Fashion Week (CFW) in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Like Harajuku, CFW is a phenomenon when people, especially teenagers from various backgrounds, flock to freely express themselves through their unique fashion gather and show off their clothing styles—which could articulated as their self-identity. Because of the uniqueness of the fashion displayed, the CFW phenomenon is also widely used by various content creators and media to create content that is disseminated on various social media platforms (Cindrakasih, 2022)—as happened in Harajuku. Through this phenomenon, we see that CFW discourse spread through social media and frames the Sudirman district as a location for people who want to show themselves through fashion. Eventually, this attracts the public to be present in Sudirman district. This phenomenon is also commodified by the media, content creators, and other business actors—there is an increase in consumer preference for fashion with attributes identical to those exhibited at CFW (Yuliana, 2023). However, this

phenomenon encourages the creativity of teenagers so that it becomes a means of developing the creative industry, especially the local textile and fashion industries (Cindrakasih, 2022).

Unfortunately, this potential has not been overutilized by the government as a form of creative economy. Looking back at government policies regarding the creative economy, there are various different interpretations that cause their implementation to vary. In Indonesia, local governments also have different interpretations regarding their creative economy policies, including their interpretation. Besides that, interpreted from the Indonesia Economic Census data in 2016, the creative economy in Indonesia is driven by three major industries, which are culinary arts, fashion, as well as *kriya* or arts and crafts. It is also said that the major players in the field of creative economy are the microenterprises. However, there are several issues and challenges for Indonesia in implementing the creative economy in its policy. The first one is the lack of standardized definition, both locally and internationally, due to its multiple definitions and inconsistent approach to classify "what are creative activities?". This brings us to the second issue faced by Indonesia, which is the unavailability of a reliable sample because of its volatility categorization. Lastly, there are the classifications of creative industries that do not meet the standards of creative industries (Lestariningsih, Maharani, & Lestari, 2018). All of these issues and challenges bring Indonesia to a blurry and confusing policy of creative economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Popular culture or "pop culture" has been imminently discussed as a variable which possess a very diverse dimension. Despite has successfully managed to get through our daily life conversation, the magnitude of pop culture as an academic study was barely acknowledged by the scholars (Kangas, 2009) especially when it comes to a thorough theorization (Daniel & Musgrave, 2017). In the context of IR, the use of "popular culture" might more related to economic activity or "mass culture" since it is produced and consumed in an industrial form (Caso & Hamilton, 2015). To put it into perspective, the process includes their inputs (raw materials, labour, technology), practices (of production and consumption), and outputs (films, clothing, toys, etc.) (Weldes & Rowley, 2015). Therefore, recognition of pop culture was initially perceived as something more of an economical process rather than a political one and their influence which has stepped beyond the state border has caught the interest of social sciences thinkers, particularly in International Political Economy (IPE) areas.

The term culture might bring an ambiguous understanding yet, here we believe that the use of the "culture" term is the closest vocabulary available in explaining the collective interpretation of meaning as well as attempting to communicate and exchange it. Pragmatically, a meaningful connection between pop culture is derived from the very function of IR which is explaining the power and ideas relation between the actors. Moreover, many scholars from the critical or post-modern thoughts like Adorno, Althusser, Lyotard, and Said have been able to demonstrate that relations of power and their contestation extend beyond the institutional and formal process. They agreed upon one thing, namely the position of pop culture as indivisible from politics since it has become the space where power, ideology, and identity are constituted, produced, and/or materialized (Grayson, et. al, 2009).

At the very least, we see that the significance of pop culture in IR rests on two things. First, it resembles a particular identity or subjective understanding of a particular society (state) which inherently discloses how they perceive other cultures/identities. Pop culture is often associated as a form of “soft power” due to the capability to attract or engage people to act in a certain way beyond a state-based strategy, for example, military intervention (Suryani, 2015). Furthermore, by analyzing how particular popular culture is produced we can spot a very nuanced interpretation of a more rigid idea construction, such as national identity (Caso & Hamilton, 2015). A few notable examples of pop culture production, Captain America, K-pop, etc resemble a more complex understanding of popular culture not only as a product of entertainment but also as a political and economic agenda (Dittmer, 2004; Suryani, 2015). A more cost and benefit perspective of IPE can also be found in the K-Pop phenomenon where pop culture appears as a tool for generating profit. This can be traced in Hallyu—the very movement where K-pop impetus—which was bolstered by infrastructure enhancement as it became part of the country’s agenda of liberalization in the 90’s (Tse, Tsin, & Shang, 2020). Therefore, pop culture covers one of the most essential aspects of the creative economy due to its wide-range dimension in cultivating attraction psychologically, culturally, and politically.

Given this, the discussion of the profitization of culture, including pop culture, cannot be separated from the creative economy discourse that evolves around it. Although the creative economy in its definition still ambiguous and broad, such as the placement of its concept between economics and policy with culture and policy (Taylor, 2015) and its diverse categories, pop culture is also included in this definition. Pop culture also influences various fields in people's social lives, one of which is how to dress, commonly known as fashion (Vyomakesisri, Sonu, & Srikanth, 2020). Fashion is also one of the categories that are taken into account in creative economy discourses which has the most quantity of other categories, especially for developing countries (Beukelaer, 2014). As explained above about pop culture, fashion is also the most widely recognized expression of identity and self-freedom (Jairath & Daima, 2020). Thus, every individual in society can translate their creativity through fashion, which also explains its correlation with creative terms in the creative economy.

The creative economy, thus, highlights that individual can be classified as creative capital which is one of the main drivers of the creative industry. Individual creativity, talent, and skills become modalities in creating, not only, wealth and jobs, but also the exploitation of intellectual property. Regarding to that, there are two opposing views in analyzing the concept of ‘creative economy’. The first one emphasizes the cultural values, arts, and community well-being instead of economic values—culture-centric orientation or the culturalization of economies. Contradicts to that, the second view emphasizes more on the economic values of a culture—econocentric orientation or the economization of culture (Andres and Chapain, 2013).

The creative economy is utilized by big industrial players and other business players who make cultural objects as new objects that are commodified (Kim, 2017). Due to that, the rise of the creative economy cannot be separated from the practice of capitalism, especially in the following three types of capitalism: shareholders, state, and stakeholders capitalism. In shareholder capitalism, the creative economy is manifested through creative industries developed by large corporations and governments that negate local characteristics. This also

often eliminates the position of MSMEs and encourages hyper-consumerism due to the need for dynamic fashion, especially in the midst of the development of pop culture. Meanwhile, state capitalism is a practice of capitalism that indicates the dominance of the state in the market so that people's creativity in the economy is suppressed. Finally, the most utopian is stakeholder capitalism which includes the government and civil society by forming a 'creative class' as a solution (Jesus, 2020).

Through the explanation above, it can be seen that the government can intervene in the implementation of the creative economy. The concept of a creative economy that is still blurry also has implications for differences in the way each country's government translates it in their respective policies. Innovation, knowledge transfer, and entrepreneurship that arise within the creative economy, make this concept one of the important efforts for the government to be implemented in the country's development agenda (Taylor, 2015). The case studies in Korea and the United Kingdom which analyze the role of countries in implementing the creative economy concept, show differences in application in policy practices in each country. The former plays an important role in leading the creative economy industries with a strong role of big industrial players or conglomerates to support the SMEs—the government policies were controlled by politics. By declaring “Creative Korea” and forming the Creative Economy Initiative (CEI) and Culture Creation and Convergence Belt (CEL) during Park's Presidency, also indicates how the nation plays a strong role in leading the way of their creative economy. Contradicts that, the British model highlights the roles of private enterprises and reduces itself to a mere sponsor of the private sector. The British model represents neoliberal ideologies, which argue to reduce the government's part in managing the national economy so that private businesses and capital can reorganize policies suiting their tastes—allowing the creative economy industries to be more ‘creative’ (Kim, 2017).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Considering the lack of academic discussion on this topic, this article aims to explain news coverage of CFW through the lens of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis have a very strong association with post-modern school of thought since it tries to capture the intersectionality of psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, and philosophical linguistic (Brown and Yule, 1983). The relations between them appears to be important as many scholars discovered that there have been a lot of incompatibility between the meaning of word and it's used in the daily life. Thus, discourse analysis is an attempt to crack the constructed meaning of word since critical and post-modern theories believe that our comprehension is very much dictated by our construction rather than a nature of the world itself. This particular claim leads to any attempt to analyses the use of language in a cultural and historical-driven society (Gill, 2000).

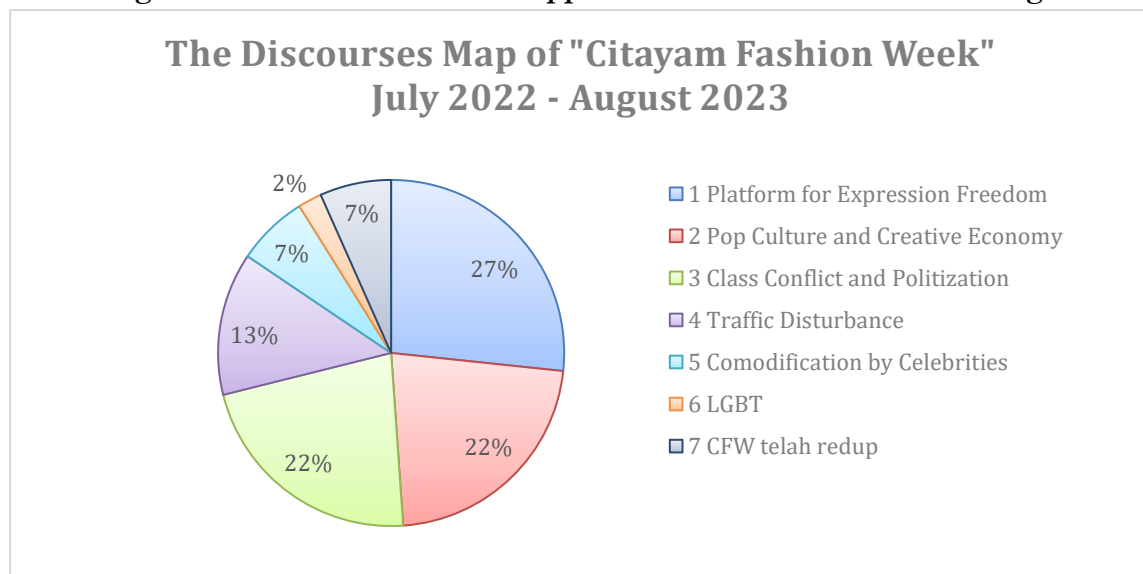
As the epistemological development has continued to take place, discourse analysis has also found itself evolving from a linguistic-based to a more sociological approach. Discourse analysis rooted from critical linguistic which attempted to examine the opposition system that put the signifier and signified (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Fairclough, 1989). Thus, such methodology was warmly recognized in the media studies, especially in examining how news are framed by the press (Gill, 2000).

A more emphasis on the manner and historical experience—of how is a speech is delivered, the action used while stating them, and the history of the use of particular words—eventually saw the light of academic voyage influenced by speech-act theory (Coulthart & Montgomery, 1981; Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) and post-structuralist agenda in tracing the historical experience of a word (Foucault, 1971; 1981). This approach stress more on how a conversation is possible to be analyzed as a tool of accomplishment for specific political agenda. Based on Foucault's idea, power and knowledge cannot be separated from each other. Furthermore, Foucault explained how knowledge—which is the accumulation of discourse—ultimately has the ability to organize and direct social order. In explaining discursiveness in a discourse, the author sees that this is closely related to Michel Foucault's later thinking, namely about the discourse of power and knowledge. For Foucault, power and knowledge cannot be separated from each other. Foucault then introduced the term episteme, which is a characterization of time referring to certain characteristics as a result of the operation of power produced by knowledge.

DISCUSSION

After undertaking a data analysis consists of 43 news article that were retrieved from national, independent, and local media throughout July 2022-August 2023, we find that there are three ideas that become a dominant discourse of CFW, which are (1) a platform for expression freedom, (2) creative economy potential, and (3) class conflict and politization. Apart from those three main topics, we have also revealed several other topics, such as traffic disobedience, co-optation by celebrities, LGBT, and the decline of CFW. The categorization for each article was based on the thorough reading of the content. One article can be placed in more than 1 category if the content was comprehensively talking about more than one of the three main topics. Through this article, we would like to offer a more empirical perspective about what needs to be done in managing pop culture as a potential creative economy source.

Figure 1. Dominant Discourse appear on CFW Media News Coverage



Source: authors analysis

Platform for Expression

The expression platform has become the biggest discussion of CFW. Of the 43 pieces of news articles, 11 articles (See: Table 1)—which makes it the highest out of the three topics—emphasize how the CFW rose as a stage for teenagers to express themselves through the wearing of a diverse model of fashion as well as their struggles against the classist opinion. CFW appears as “public necessity” due to its strategic location that can be accessed by a lot of people, especially those who comes from the surrounding area, such as Depok, Citayam, Bojonggede, etc. An international media, *ABC News* even uses words like “budget fashionistas” and “organic fashion phenomenon” to describe the colourful atmosphere of the CFW.

“Citayam Fashion Week — an organic fashion phenomenon based around a crosswalk near the Dukuh Atas station and park area in Central Jakarta — is the hot new thing in Indonesia's capital, and Muhamad is one of its stars”. (ABC, 2022)

The use of the terms “organic fashion phenomenon” and “budget fashionistas” indicates that the media framed CFW as a spontaneous cultural movement emerging from ordinary young people rather than from established fashion institutions. At the same time, the phrase “budget fashionistas” highlights the participants’ lower-middle-class backgrounds and distinguishes them from the elite fashion culture commonly associated with central Jakarta. This framing demonstrates that CFW functioned not only as a platform for fashion expression but also as a symbolic challenge to class-based boundaries over visibility, recognition, and access to urban public space. Apart from possible accessibility for the sub-urban young commuters, the discourse of expression freedom also contains a political and social message, for example what is discussed by *INews* where the parliament member stated that the CFW must be put aside from any manners of commercialization.

“Kalaupun Citayam Fashion Week di Dukuh Atas harus ditutup karena alasan kemacetan, keamanan, dan ketertiban maka harus dicari tempat lain yang kondusif agar energi kreativitas anak-anak muda tersebut tetap bisa tersalurkan,” kata Puan Maharani di Jakarta [If Citayam Fashion Week at Dukuh Atas has to be discontinued because of traffic congestion, security, and public-order concerns, an alternative and suitable venue must be provided so that these young people can continue to channel their creative energy,” Puan Maharani said in Jakarta], Wednesday (27/7/2022). (INews, 2022)

This statement frames CFW as more than a temporary gathering that could simply be dispersed because of traffic, security, or public-order concerns. By calling for an alternative venue, Puan Maharani acknowledged young people’s creativity and freedom of expression as legitimate activities that deserved institutional support. Nevertheless, this framing also reveals a tension between recognizing youth expression and regulating where that expression may take place. Apart from political agenda, a social sentiment also appears as a strong content, for example the case of class fragmentation brought up by *tvonenews.com* which mentioned that there was a transition from an inclusive space for multi-background youngsters to a space only for those with “good-looking”.

“Sekarang Citayam Fashion Week kegusur sama orang-orang yang good looking,” tulis keterangan video. [Now, Citayam Fashion Week has been taken over by conventionally attractive people,” the video caption read]”. (TvOneNews, 2022)

From the identification above, we found that the dimension of expression freedom platform CFW was widely recognized. Nevertheless, public acknowledgment for this topic is also “distorted” by other problems, such as class sentiment, stereotyping, and traffic disturbance. One example from article no. 2, “*Citayam Fashion Week di Sudirman Mengapa Diusik? Iri Bilang Bos*” written by Suara.com which discussed about how the government throw a lot of stigmas and bad labelling towards CFW. The recognition of freedom of expression was conditional: CFW was celebrated as long as it remained entertaining, orderly, and commercially attractive, but it became problematized when suburban youth occupied an urban space usually associated with Jakarta’s professional and middle classes. Therefore, the controversy surrounding CFW reflected concerns over public order and a struggle over who was considered entitled to visibility and participation in the city centre.

Creative Economy and Pop Culture

Creative economy was the second most frequent topic discussed by the media. As the CFW rose to the national discussion, it draws a lot of attention not only in terms of cultural aspect but also economically. This economic potential is emphasized by Tvonenews as a result of a vibrant hype that created by youth—especially college students and local clothing. The students often came to do an academic research while the local clothing owners obtained new segment of buyers.

“Alasan mengapa Harajuku masih eksis sampai sekarang tidak lepas dari peran banyaknya mahasiswa dari perguruan tinggi jurusan mode dan kecantikan ikut berkontribusi, seperti membawa penggiat Harajuku menjadi model dalam tugas kuliah. Selain itu toko-toko lokal juga senang hadirnya Harajuku karena pemasukan meningkat [Harajuku’s continued existence to this day is closely linked to the contributions of fashion and beauty students, who, for example, involve members of the Harajuku community as models for their university assignments. Local businesses also welcome Harajuku’s presence because it increases their revenue]” (Tvonenews, 2022)

The comparison with Harajuku illustrates how media coverage imagined the potential development of CFW demonstrating its actual economic impact. Harajuku’s sustainability has been supported by interactions among fashion students, local creative communities, and small businesses, which transform street fashion into a broader creative ecosystem. By referring to this experience, the media suggested that CFW could generate similar opportunities for academic collaboration, local clothing businesses, and youth entrepreneurship. However, realizing this potential would require sustained institutional support and the active involvement of local participants; otherwise, CFW could remain a temporary media trend or be commercialized mainly for the benefit of established actors. Apart from the potential aspect of creative economy, CFW was also seen to be immaculate in terms of breaking a new notion of pop culture. Having it compared with *Harajuku*, people found authenticity of CFW by its inclusive nature—especially when it was attended by those who comes not from Jakarta but the suburban surrounding it. JakartaGlobe highlighted such extravagance that is also driven by the mass use of social media.

“These young people are very good at exploiting social media and the Citayam Fashion Show is getting popularity that attracting attendants from other places.” (Jakarta Globe, 2022)”

Through its title, Local media such as Bogor Insider also points out how the CFW Fever has spreaded across other cities in Indonesia, such as Bogor, Makassar, and Surabaya.

“Virus Citayam Fashion Week, Muncul Bogor Fashion Week Sampai Madiun Fashion Week di 6 Daerah Ini [Citayam Fashion Week Fever Spreads: From Bogor Fashion Week to Madiun Fashion Week, Similar Events Emerge in Six Regions]” (Bogor Insider, 2022)

The social media did not merely publicize CFW but also enabled suburban youth to produce and circulate their own cultural representations without depending on established fashion institutions. Through this process, participants who were commonly marginalized from Jakarta’s elite cultural spaces became visible as trendsetters and creators of popular culture. CFW’s authenticity therefore emerged from its bottom-up and inclusive character, in which popularity was generated through the participants’ digital activities and public performances rather than through formal promotion by the fashion industry. The emergence of similar events in Bogor, Madiun, Makassar, Surabaya, and other cities further demonstrates how CFW developed from a localized street-fashion gathering into a nationally recognizable cultural format. However, this replication also reveals a tension between cultural diffusion and commodification. While the spread of “fashion week” events expanded opportunities for youth expression, reproducing the CFW label in different cities could gradually detach the phenomenon from its original social context: the struggle of suburban youth for visibility and recognition in central Jakarta. Thus, the media did not simply document CFW’s popularity but actively contributed to transforming it into a reproducible form of Indonesian popular culture.

Class Conflict and Politization

As mentioned above, class conflict becomes one of the most imminent topics of the CFW. This happens due to the inclusive atmosphere CFW brought to the audience. Therefore, few medias highlighted the possibility of CFW becoming a platform for “middle-lower class” particularly the young generation. However, this potential has been undermined by any sorts of commercialization and politization for example on its article, Idntimes called it as “Created by the Poor and Stolen by The Rich” in mentioning how Baim Wong (one of Indonesian celebrity) and their company, PT. Tiger Wong Entertainment, registered the brand “Citayam Fashion Week” to the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

“Dugaan komersialisasi dari gerakan budaya Citayam Fashion Week yang paling populer adalah tindakan yang dilakukan artis Baim Wong dan istrinya, Paula Verhoeven. Mereka habis dihujat warganet usai perusahaannya, PT. Tiger Wong Entertainment, mendaftarkan merek ‘Citayam Fashion Week’ ke Hak Atas Kekayaan Intelektual (HAKI). Pendaftaran itu tercatat di situs Pangkalan Data Kekayaan Intelektual [The most widely discussed allegation of commercialization surrounding the Citayam Fashion Week cultural movement involved celebrity Baim Wong and his wife, Paula Verhoeven. They faced intense criticism from social media users after their company, PT Tiger Wong Entertainment, applied to register ‘Citayam Fashion Week’ as an intellectual property trademark. The application was recorded in Indonesia’s Intellectual Property Database.] (PDKI).” (IDN Times, 2022)

The commercialization of CFW involved the pursuit of economic profit and a struggle over symbolic ownership. Although CFW was collectively created and popularized by suburban youth, the trademark application represented an attempt by an established celebrity and corporate actor to obtain formal control over a cultural label that had emerged from a grassroots community. The strong public criticism reflected concerns that the original participants would

lose authority over the identity and potential economic benefits of the movement they had created. In this context, the IDN Times framing of CFW as being “created by the poor and stolen by the rich” constructed the trademark controversy as a form of class-based appropriation. It illustrates how actors with greater capital, public influence, and legal resources could convert a collectively produced cultural phenomenon into privately controlled intellectual property. After the attempt of commercialization, one of the other controversies lingering in CFW is politization. By using this term, we try to emphasize on how politicians and policy maker differ in addressing the CFW. For example, minister of state-owned enterprise, Erick Thohir produced the narrative of how the CFW should be allocated to Sarinah.

“Namun, Erick ingin pemindahan CFW ke Sarinah murni untuk memberikan ruang yang lebih besar bagi anak-anak muda berkreasi. Erick tak ingin niat baik anak-anak muda justru dicampuradukan dengan hal-hal yang di luar tujuan mereka. [“However, Erick emphasized that the proposed relocation of CFW to Sarinah was intended solely to provide a larger space for young people to express their creativity. He did not want their positive intentions to become entangled with matters unrelated to the movement’s original purpose.”]”

CFW emerged spontaneously in an accessible public space and gained significance because suburban youth could claim visibility within Jakarta’s central business district. Moving it to Sarinah could provide institutional support, but it could also subject the movement to greater government control and commercial interests. This tension became more evident because other government and law-enforcement actors continued to portray CFW primarily as a source of congestion, insecurity, and public disorder. Therefore, the competing responses demonstrate the absence of a coherent government approach: CFW was simultaneously celebrated as youth creativity, promoted as an economic opportunity, and regulated as an urban disturbance. The actual implementation of many advices somehow appear to be questionable since other parties of policy maker such as regional government, security enforcement, etc tend to see the CFW as something of a disturbance which causing social disobedience.

“Saat dihubungi Suara.com, Kapolsek Metro Menteng, Kompol Netty Rosdiana Siagian berkata bakal membubarkan mereka, jika tetap berkumpul di atas jam 10 malam. Netty beralasan pembubaran itu sesuai dengan PPKM Level 1 yang berlaku di DKI Jakarta. Alasan lainnya, kata Netty, karena kawasan Jalan Sudirman merupakan jalur protokol. Di samping itu para remaja ‘Citayam’ juga dikhawatirkan mengakibatkan gangguan keamanan dan ketertiban masyarakat (kamtibmas). [When contacted by Suara.com, Menteng Metro Police Chief Commissioner Netty Rosdiana Siagian stated that the authorities would disperse the participants if they continued gathering after 10:00 p.m. She explained that the dispersal would be carried out in accordance with the Level 1 Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) then in effect in Jakarta. She further noted that Jalan Sudirman is a protocol road and expressed concern that the presence of the ‘Citayam’ teenagers could disrupt public security and order.]” (Suara.com, 2022)

The authorities constructed CFW through a security-oriented discourse. The planned dispersal was justified by PPKM regulations, the strategic status of Sudirman as a protocol road, and concerns about public security. Although such considerations provided an administrative basis for regulating the gathering, they also reduced a complex cultural phenomenon to a problem of crowd control. The participants were no longer primarily represented as creative young people but as a group whose presence could disrupt the established order of the city.

The conditional nature of the government's recognition of youth expression. CFW was welcomed when it generated positive publicity and appeared to offer economic opportunities, but it became subject to restriction when suburban youth occupied public space in ways that did not conform to official expectations. Therefore, the controversy was not merely about traffic or security. It also reflected a struggle over who had the right to use, define, and become visible within Jakarta's central urban space.

CONCLUSION

Citayam Fashion Week (CFW) has stolen the spotlight of many from public to policy maker. Yet, it appears that they have divided in opinion about how should the CFW is utilized especially when we consider it as a significant social phenomenon. This article points out the discourse surrounding the CFW which highlighted three main themes (1) platform for expressions, (2) creative economy and pop culture, and (3) class conflict and politization. Apart from displaying how the media frames the CFW, we also found that the potential aspect of CFW as an engine for creative economy has been neglected—especially by the government. Those three themes appear to be competing one another and in the context of how the government failed to see the potential of creative economy, class bias also become the important drive. Therefore, rather than putting attempts in perpetuating the inclusive nature of CFW, the policy maker is carried away by the middle-class bias that undermine the potential aspect of CFW both socially and economically.

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