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Reproduce the Production: A Remark on Developmental Impacts

Twenty-five years after the reformation, Indonesia stands at a crucial crossroads between the legacy of the past and the promise of the future as it follows the logic of modernity. During this period, development is no longer seen solely as a matter of infrastructure improvement or economic growth, but also as a complex social process marked by negotiation and tension.[1] The reforms that marked the end of the authoritarian regime in 1998 opened space for political freedom, but also led to social fragmentation, ecological crises, and challenges to economic equality. Amid this openness, the face of Indonesian development reveals new, intersecting layers: art as a political tool, cities demanding sustainable rights, an economy wrapped in the myth of growth, the risk of political disasters, and the economic struggles of ordinary people amidst massive projects connecting islands and regions.

This edition of the journal begins with the understanding that development is never neutral. It is an ideological construct where competing interests, values, and narratives clash. Over the past decade, the Indonesian government has highlighted its infrastructure development agenda as a sign of national success. Toll roads, ports, airports, and industrial estates have come to symbolise progress. However, this development also prompts fundamental questions: who benefits from it? Who is marginalised in the process? These questions are relevant not only for economists or urban planners but also for artists, social researchers, and civil society, who perceive development as a space of political experience.

Contemporary developments in Indonesia reveal significant shifts in the relationship between culture, economics, and spatial politics. Art, cities, taxes, and infrastructure are no longer separate entities but instead influence one another, shaping the new face of post-reform society. Spaces of production and reproduction—both in art and in the city—are essential to understanding how power, capital, and identity are negotiated within the currents of neoliberal development and unstable democracy.

Reproductive space is a crucial aspect of understanding contemporary changes in the relationship between production and consumption. Islamic performing arts, for example, historically involved Islamic-themed performances focused on moral and ritual preaching, but many young artists now express this theme through experimental, cross-genre forms and critically engage with socio-political issues. Islamic arts festivals in Yogyakarta,

[1] Marco Bunte and Andreas Ufen, eds., *Democratization in Post-Suharto Indonesia* (Routledge, 2009), https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203934760; Andrew Rosser, "Towards a Political Economy of Human Rights Violations in Post-New Order Indonesia," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 43, no. 2 (2013): 243–56.

Bandung, and Jakarta have begun to blend elements of dance, theatre, and digital music to reinterpret spirituality in an urban and modern context. Production spaces are no longer confined to mosques or Islamic boarding schools but have expanded to galleries, community centres, and digital platforms. Meanwhile, the space of reproduction—how society consumes and interprets Islamic art—is also evolving, influenced by social media, religious tourism, and the creative economy. This transformation illustrates that Islamic art now functions not only religiously but also culturally and politically, serving as a means of negotiating Muslim identity amidst modernity and global capitalism. Muhyidin, in his article "Traditional Performing Arts and Islamization: Ricklefs' Framework Amid Historical Discontinuities in Sleman, Yogyakarta," states that PASER (Paguyuban Seni Religius), a performing arts organisation in Sleman, exhibits a shift in its artistic stance towards santri (devout Muslim), through its use of percussion instruments and frequent performances of hadrah and selawatan (prayer songs). Muhyidin interprets this shift through Ricklefs' perspective and considers PASER to be akin to putihan Islam.

Urban growth is also closely connected to environmental issues. Rapid urban expansion causes significant ecological effects such as the reduction of green spaces, water pollution, and even an air crisis. Investment- and property-focused urban development often neglects sustainability principles. However, new movements are emerging that prioritise community-based ecological cities, including urban farming initiatives, community gardens, and green architecture. Victor Imanuel W. Nalle's article "The Right to the City and Laudato Si' Ethics: An Integrated Framework for Sustainable Urban Development," emphasises the importance of Laudato Si's approach, which combines ecology and social justice in securing the right to the city. Laudato Si develops a self-critical perspective on changes in human lifestyles impacting the environment, such as the decline of public transportation, the privatisation of low-income areas, and housing inequality. As a result, urban space has become a battleground between economic interests and citizens' ecological rights. Urban production is now about more than just buildings; it also encompasses sustainability discourse. Urban reproduction refers to how citizens revitalise their spaces through sustainable social practices.

Talk of tax increases seems endless. A 12% tax hike on the consumption and services sector, starting in 2025, has sparked debate. On one side, the government claims this policy is needed to strengthen the country's fiscal health after the pandemic. On the other, its impact on the lower middle class is considerable, especially on MSMEs and the informal sector. High taxes on consumption can reduce people's purchasing power, increase inequality, and slow local economic activity. This tax issue illustrates the ongoing tension between macroeconomic policy and micro-welfare, which remains unbalanced due to a lack of fair redistribution. Andi Haryono and Awaludin Marwan compare the Value Added Tax (VAT) increases in Indonesia and other Asia-Pacific countries to explain the different

strategic approaches and effects. Moreover, they argue that Indonesia's VAT should be supported by strategies that protect vulnerable groups and reduce increasing inequality.

Meanwhile, flood risk politics and policies increasingly stress the importance of environmentally based spatial governance. Flooding in Jakarta, Semarang, and several other major cities is not merely a natural phenomenon but a result of unequal spatial planning policies. The filling of wetlands, development without adequate capacity assessments, and weak environmental regulations create a "politics of risk" that leaves the poor most vulnerable. Ratna Istriyani highlighted the need for change to reduce tidal flooding risks on Java's northern coast by tackling root causes and strengthening mitigation policies, especially for affected lower socioeconomic groups. In her article, "Unequal Exposure: The Politics of Tidal Flood Risk Inequality on Java's Northern Coast," she criticises the calculation of profits from exploiting nature and lifestyle contributions to environmental harm by leaning on technical solutions to address tidal flood issues. Disaster mitigation policies often tend to be reactive rather than preventive, revealing the persistent dominance of short-term development paradigms over long-term ecological visions.

Conversely, infrastructure development, such as the Trans-Java toll road, has mixed socio-economic effects. While this infrastructure boosts mobility and the distribution of goods, it also reshapes the local economic landscape. Many small businesses on non-toll roads lose customers, whereas large logistics and transportation firms benefit the most. Additionally, toll roads foster new opportunities in rest areas and buffer zones, giving rise to new economic patterns centred on local services and tourism. The challenge now is to ensure that the benefits of toll roads are not solely limited to the central government but also reach communities on the outskirts. "The Trans-Java Toll Road as Neoliberal Spatial Fix: Economic Restructuring and MSME Marginalisation" is an article examining the spatial impacts of the Trans Java toll road. Chanif Naim highlighted the contradiction between the development of the Pantura toll road and economic growth on one side and the widening of inequality and territorial fragmentation on the other. The focus on maintaining neoliberal infrastructure has led to spatial injustice and increased risks of neglecting the socio-economic sector.

Through the five themes outlined above, this journal edition invites readers to see development not as a straightforward journey towards progress, but as an ongoing process of humanitarian negotiation. Overall, Indonesia's contemporary dynamics show that space—whether in the arts, cities, or the economy—is no longer neutral. It is a political landscape where discourses of social, ecological, and spiritual justice are constantly challenged. Amidst these rapid changes, Indonesia's greatest challenge is not merely in constructing, but in ensuring that every sphere of production and reproduction—whether in art, policy, or daily life-remains aligned with humanity and sustainability.

True development is not measured by the length of toll roads or the height of skyscrapers, but by the extent to which it preserves human dignity and promotes a just

social life. Development should be a space where technology and culture meet, between the state and its citizens, and between the economy and ecology. It is within this space that art, politics, and everyday life converge, creating opportunities for a more humane future.

We hope this journal edition can deepen our understanding of development, not only as a policy discussion but also as a lived experience that must be constantly critiqued, nurtured, and championed. Ultimately, development reflects how we comprehend humanity itself. This edition also attempts to explore the possibilities that are continuously happening in the global south, which the editorial board specifically follows, the decolonial criticism, which emphasises the capitalist matrix of power, as Mignolo[2] argues, while also offering the existing condition which may explore the alternatives of development according to Escobar[3] critical development. Secondly, this edition enriches perspective for valorising the "pluriversality" instated in the discourse of universalism endorsed by the modernity project. Lastly, the editorial board would like to thank the authors for demonstrating their capacity and knowledge to enrich the debate on development issues.

Dien Vidia Rosa
Editor-In-Chief

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[3] Arturo Escobar, "Alternatives to Development': An Interview with Arturo Escobar - Resilience," October 1, 2012, Resilience, https://www.resilience.org/stories/2012-10-02/alternatives-development-interview-arturo-escobar/; Arturo Escobar, "Farewell to Development: An Interview with Arturo Escobar - Local Futures," March 9, 2018, Local Futures, https://www.localfutures.org/farewell-to-development-an-interview-with-arturo-escobar/.

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