



## A Study of Structural Functionalism on A musical group named Nasida Ria

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### Abstract

Nasida Ria is a popular modern qasidah group and has popular songs in the society. This group was born as a form of a group's expression and as a communication media among those people having a preaching mission through the media of arts, that is music. Nasida Ria was founded by KH. Muhammad Zain, and for almost 4 decades, the group has been established and still exists until now. The typical characteristic of the musical performance of modern Qasidah of Nasida Ria is the nine woman musicians who wears hijab. The problem of the research discussed in this writing will focus on the study of how structural functionalism works on the group, Nasida Ria. The methodology of the research applied will be qualitative method with an sociological approach to art through the theory of structural functionalism. The techniques of collecting data used on the research will be observation, interview, and document study. Then, the data validity will be checked by applying triangulation method and continued with data reduction, data presentation, and the drawing of conclusion. According to Robert K. Merton every element of a group will have a function, a dysfunction, a latent function, a manifest function, and an effort to reach the balance. The result of the research shows that the continuation of Nasida Ria is because every part or structure of the group has been functional to each other. The parts of the group are the manager, song composer, music players, and fans. However, there is also a dysfunction in the group, Nasida Ria, i.e. in the regeneration process of the group. Even so, with the feeling as a family attached to every personnel of the group, such dysfunction can be well overcome. Therefore, the balance and the integrity of the group can be developed continuously. The hope of the fans that Nasida Ria will still exist and have a new album is its manifest function, whereas its latent function, the unexpected function, is the discontinuation of Nasida Ria group.

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## INTRODUCTION

Art is a thing that can't be separated from human life during his or her life in this Earth. The existence of art in the society's life grows and developed in harmony with the society's interests, one of which can function as the society's media to express themselves. di muka bumi ini. Wadiyo (2008: 28) said, "The existence of art always presents in the middle of human lives in a society, either as a personal expression or a communal expression of a group of men or society."

Men expressions on art can be realized, one of them, through music. Sunarto in Waesberghe (2012: 80-81) stated that music art, whether in theory or in practice, functions as an art which mainly expresses human feeling. Melody, rhythm, dynamics, and lyrics in music serve as medium for men to express themselves. However, one important function of music in Merriam's opinion (2001: 299-300) is an opportunity that it gives to various emotional expressions in the form of the release of thoughts and ideas not bring able to be expresses as a result of a correlation of various emotion about music, the explosion of creativity and group's expression.

The relation of music not only ends as a part of art and a media for men to express themselves, but also as a communication media. Merriam (2001: 301) explained on the communicative function of music, "The fact that music is owned together as a human activity by all people can mean that it communicates a particular understanding limited merely because of its existence". For that reason, music can be a media to convey information, a communication media, in a way of a lyric presented in it. According to Samsuri (1995: 28) one alternative method of preaching which is now seen a lot is preaching using art media. It is because art can give suggestion to its listeners either indirectly or directly, and even has a high appeal to its listeners. Therefore, the preaching messages are not conveyed as usual through sermon or lecture.

Modern Qasidah Music is one type of arts characterized with Islam. This kind of music arose because of the acculturation and deculturation process of the previous existing Islamic art. Rebana or tambourine music is a type of music deriving from the existing Islamic music. Because the music acculturated locally with Arabian culture, then in a long period of time rebana or tambourine music experienced deculturation process, that is experiencing change on its musical elements to fulfill the need for a new presentation. Because of the new situation, then modern qasidah group is formed.

(Susetyo, 2005: 2). The forms of its composition and presentation are a big ensemble, like with a rhythm pattern of terbangan, categorized as traditional music with diatonic tone, using instruments like: terbangan, drum set, ketipung, tambourine, electric guitar and electric bass, flute, violin, etc (Susetyo, 2005: 1).

The 1970s was the era of the rising of modern qasidah groups in Indonesia music industry. This type of music adds to the variety of music, besides dangdut, keroncong, pop and other kinds of music previously existing. One of the famous modern qasidah groups and having popular songs in the society is modern qasidah music group called Nasida Ria from Semarang. This group was born as an expression form of a group, as a media of communication among Islam people and having an Islamic preaching mission through art media, i.e. music.

The embryo of Nasida Ria started from rebana or tambourine group. But, thanks to the innovation and creation of the late H. Muhammad Zain, this group has its own music genre. The performance of Nasida Ria qasidah music has typical characteristics of having supporting artists and musicians consisted of 9 women wearing hijab. However, now Nasida Ria consists of twelve players to support its performance. The instruments used are electric bass, electric guitar, drum or kendang, violin, flute, mandolin, and tambourine. If rebana qasidah is more dominant than singing a desert rhythm song in Arabic, then Nasida Ria qasidah tries to break into the variety of similar rhythm

music by making a creation through Indonesian lyrics and songs.

Songs created and sung in the performance of Nasida Ria qasidah music contain timeless advise. As a group of modern qasidah music, 34 albums in Indonesian language and 2 albums in Arabic. The first album of Nasida Ria is *Alabaladil Makabul* produced in 1978. *Shalawat Badar, Kaya Miskin Bahagia, Damailah Palestina, Makhadir, Nabi Muhammad Insan Pilihan, Perdamaian, Kota Santri, and Jilbab Putih* are some titles of the songs that are familiar to the society. Moreover, in this era those songs are rearranged and sung by today's popular group and singer. The song "Perdamaian", for example, was rearranged and sung by GIGI band, while the song "Kota Santri" was sung by Krisdayanti. This showed that there was an appreciation given by the society on the musical works composed by Nasida Ria.

The development of qasidah music is not as progressive as other types of music, but this kind of music ever took the concern of the society in the 1980s and has its own fans until now. According to Hung Ning Hui (2017) by using Nasida Ria the person as the object of the study explains that the development of modern qasidah now is to preserve the essence of traditional not to set aside it. Then, modernization in modern qasidah music meaning that following the main characteristic of world music in the 20th century and at once emphasizing on the representation of other traditional elements. Therefore, Nasida Ria as a legend of modern qasidah music in Indonesia is hoped to be able to keep the continuation of the group in the middle of the fast development of music industry. The formulation of the problem of the study is how structural functionalism works on Nasida Ria. The result of the study is hoped to be able to be a benefit for other musical groups, as a reference for them on how to keep the existence of a group.

Nasida Ria as one of modern qasidah groups in its effort to keep the continuation of the group studied by using structural functionalism theory by Robert K. Merton. This

theory has point of view that in a system there are parts which have relation and functional to each other. Besides that, structural functionalism also has 5 basic concepts, such as function, manifest function, latent function, dysfunction, and balance. Function is the effects that can be observed which lead to adaptation in a system. Manifest function is the expected function. Latent function is the unexpected function. Dysfunctions are negative effects (Ritzer dalam Alimandan 1992: 25-27).

## METHOD

This research used qualitative method by applying sociological approach. The object of this research is modern qasidah group named Nasida Ria during its effort to maintain the existence of the group. Data in a qualitative research are on the form of descriptions, so the data Collection techniques used are observation, interview, and document study. To check whether the data collected valid or not, triangulation, and data analysis technique using data reduction technique, data presentation, and data verification are applied.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The History of the founding of Nasida Ria

Qasidah Nasida Ria was formed in 1975 in Semarang. It was founded by the late KH. Muhammad Zain. He was a muslim preacher and a *qira'at Al-Qur'an teacher, born in Kendal in Kendal in 1928*. He was a son of a couple of husband and wife named Hasyim and Khodijah. As a *qira'at* teacher who taught muslim students from the national level, he had a lot of students who had good voices in reading the holy verses of *Al-Quran*. Before establishing Nasida Ria, he ever founded *gambus* music group called Assabab in 1965, which had woman and man personnel. But, its popularity could only survive until 1970 because of the death of the vocalist, Juariyah, who became the icon of the group, Assabab.

Starting from having a lot of students who had beautiful voices and his experience in

founding a gambus group, Assabab, KH. Muhammad Zain then founded Nasida Ria with his nine students whom he asked to join in the group. But, this group, Nasida Ria, had its own uniqueness compared to his previous group. The nine personnels of Nasida Ria were all women and brought a type of rebana music which later changed into a group of modern qasidah music. The purpose of founding Nasida Ria could not be separated from the background of KH. Muhammad Zain as a Muslim preacher and a *qira'at* teacher. The purpose is as a media for an Islamic preaching through art. It was because at the time, preaching method by applying art approach wasn't used much; therefore, he was very much obsessed with preaching through song lyrics. For such a reason, he founded a group named Nasida Ria.

In the beginning of the group formation, Nasida Ria was a group of rebana. But, because the whole personnels were women and has good vocal skill, this group quickly became famous and made the group get a lot of responses in its first years. Semarang major, who at that time was held by H. Iman Soeparto Tjakrajoeda, was very impressed with the performance of Nasida Ria, and then had a willing to contribute musical instrument, i.e. keyboard and facilitated Nasida Ria to study about music. Since then, the performance of Nasida Ria became more organized and modern. Moreover, after Nasida Ria equipped itself with tambourine, drum, bass guitar, violin, and electric guitar, it turned from rebana or tambourine group into modern qasidah music. The group of modern qasidah, Nasida Ria, sings Islamic songs mixed with classical Arabian music, mishri genre music, and Arabian lyric which are also mixed with modern western music instrument.

KH. Drs. Ahmad Bukhori or more famous with the name, Drs. Abu Ali Haidar as one of the song composers of Nasida Ria proposed in order that Nasida Ria songs which at the beginning used Arabic, were changed into Indonesian language, but still contained of Islamic preaching messages. He suggested the change in order that the Islamic messages through Indonesian song lyrics can be more

effective conveyed to the society. In the songs of Nasida Ria, even though containing Islamic preaching, they also talks about some issues on, for example, pers, justice, enviroment, natural disaster, gambling, wars, and although the songs have worldly themes, they are still based on *Al-Qur'an*.

### **Structural Functionalism in the group called Nasida Ria**

Merton explained that Structural functional analysis focuses on the concern to a group, organization, society, and culture (Ritzer, 2012). This research places the continuation of the Nasida Ria qasidah group as a system which has elements or parts which are functional to each other and has relationship between one and another. So, if the parts of the system can work on their functions well, there will be a balance on the system. However, if the parts do not do their functions well, it will disturb the balance of the whole system. Those parts includes the manager, composer, music player, and fans. The Structural functional theory by Robert K. Merton viewed that in a system, there are function, dysfunction, latent function, manifest function, and the effort aimed at maintaining the balance.

### **Function**

Function according to Merton is defined as consequences realized and creating adaptation of a system (Ritzer, 2012). In accordance to Kaplan in Pujiyanti Nunik (2013; 4) functional theory makes an analogy of a social cultural system as an organism, whose parts are not only related to each other, but also give roles for the maintenance of the stability of the life preservation of the organism itself. Nasida Ria as a system' has elements which are functional to each other. The following is the explanation of the function of each element in Nasida Ria.

### **Manager**

According to Meizu (2017: 151) a manager is a person who performs management activity. In every Business organization,

managers works to ensure that all goals decided by the organization, can be realized through a set of management activities, either functional or operational. A manager, of course, must have skills to do his jobs. The skills include technical skill, conceptual skill, communication and interaction skill, decision making skill, time management skill, skill in global management and skill in technology.

In Nasida Ria group, the manager is Mr. Choliq Zain. He is the son of Nasida Ria founder, the late Mr. Muhammad Zain. As a manager he is demanded to do the managerial jobs well. He proved it by making Nasida Ria survive until now. The solidarity and integrity of the group can be kept by him because he always applies and puts forward the feeling as a family and professionalism in leading the group. Thought and ideas he applies are capable of keeping the existence of Nasida Ria from the absolutely dynamic development of music industry.

All technical things related to Nasida Ria, such as rehearsal schedule, place, tools and equipment for rehearsal or for stage performance, accomodation, and costumes are noticed by Mr. Zain very well. One of the examples is when he decided to rent a good quality sound system in the town where Nasida Ria performed, which showed that his decision could save the cost for accomodation. His ability to do his function as a qualified manager could also be seen when his ideas, thoughts, and decision for Nasida Ria were acceptable and done by all members of Nasida Ria, even though he was younger than some of Nasida Ria music players. It shows that he also has a good capability of making decision, having communication and interaction.

His skill in using technology to promote Nasida Ria was also showed by his effort in making some accounts for Nasida Ria in various social media used by many people. For that, the performance schedules and pictures of Nasida Ria show could be seen by various communities. As a consequence, Nasida Ria was invited to join music festivals at which most of their audiences were young generations. The using of

social media is felt by Mr. Zain to be very effective to maintain the communication with the loyal fans. Based on that explanation, in line with the function concept of Structural Functionalism theory, every part relates to each other and has a role in the group.

### **Song Composer**

A song composer has a great part or role in making the name of a musical group become big, no exception with Nasida Ria. Through the song he or she has composed, a communication between the music players and the audiences or fans will be tied during the performance. By creating songs which are loved by the society, it will certainly make a group of music very easily to reach popularity. Nasida Ria as a group of music which has long been in the music industry in Indonesia has many song composers. The creativity of the Nasida Ria song composer is capable of making songs preferred by the society.

One of the song composer who has made a lot of songs for Nasida Ria is Pak Ahmad Bukhori. He used his pseudo name, Drs. Ali Abu Haidar, written on the cover of Nasida Ria cassette. He is a graduate from University of Walisongo Semarang and works as a *da'i* or a muslim preacher. As a bachelor, he has a good intelligence in understanding and solving a problem. Moreover, as a muslim preacher, he also has a cognitive style and simple personality, charismatic and courteous to anyone. So, it can't be denied that his songs are full of the preaching mission and spirit to advise others in doing good deeds. The result of an interview with Mr. Bukhori on July 15th, 2017, it was known that he had composed hundreds of songs for Nasida Ria. However, the songs entitled "perdamaian" (peace) and "tahun 2000" or year of 2000 are songs which impress him more. It was because "perdamaian" was able to make Nasida Ria popular in the society, while the famous song "tahun 2000" was a song he could create only in less than a day. Even now, during his suffering from stroke, he is still creating a song for Nasida Ria which he keeps the title in secret. He hopes that Nasida Ria will be popular again and stays

bringing songs containing muslim preaching. Mr. Bukhori as one of the elements in the group has given his big part in Nasida Ria, and it is in line with the concept of function from the theory of Structural Functionalism.

#### **Music Players or Members of Nasida Ria**

In the past, the number of Nasida Ria music players was nine. Every member of the group was made to be able to play at a minimum one musical instrument and be capable of singing. This has become one of the typical characteristics of the group, Nasida Ria which differentiates the group from other modern qasidah groups. However, after the regeneration, now the number of Nasida Ria music player becomes twelve every time the group performs. It is a way to anticipate when one day the senior players can't perform anymore. Therefore, there will be other players who will replace them.

In Nasida Ria regeneration process, at first Mr. Choliq as the manager will spread announcement for a competition to select new members via either prints or electronic media. The process of selecting new music players for Nasida Ria will be conducted by Mr. Choliq Zain carefully. Some requirements that must be possessed to become the member of Nasida Ria are that they are muslim women, that they must wear hijab, that they are good at reading Qur'an and doing qira'ah, and that they must be able to keep their manners in their daily relationship with others. After some people are selected, Mr. Zain will facilitate them with a music and vocal training. During the training process, Mr. Zain and some senior members will evaluate all aspects owned by those who pass the selection process and decide who will completely be ready to become the next generation of Nasida Ria and to work together in keeping Nasida Ria good reputation.

Every member of Nasida Ria must obey the rehearsal schedule that has been made. This is very important to maintain the group solidarity and togetherness, whether it is on the stage or not. The feeling of making all members of the group as a family is also another important thing on the group, Nasida Ria,

because of a member has the feeling that the group is like his or her own family, a good communication can be made. With such a communication, every problem faced by the group can be solved. Therefore, it is hoped that the solidity among the members can be kept in order that every performance of the group can run maximally.

#### **Fans**

Fans are one of the elements that can not be separated from a musical group, no exception Nasida Ria. From the interview with Pak Choliq, it was got that every month, Nasida Ria performs either in town or outside the town. This could happen because the group has its own fans, i.e. Students at Muslim schools, kyai (Javanese expert in Islam), and Muslim schools. But, besides that, the group is also often invited to perform on several events, such as circumcision ceremonies, wedding events, inaugurations, or any other entertaining events held by private or government institutions. The appreciation of its fans is unbelievable. This could be seen from the large number of audiences who watch when Nasida Ria is performing. Even, it is also often found that fans from outside Java and abroad sparing their time to visit the place where Nasida Ria is doing its rehearsal when they visit Semarang. This is in agreement with the theory of structural functionalism that every part connects to each other and has its role in a group.

#### **Dysfunction**

In accordance to Merton in Ritzer (2012) dysfunction arises because of social facts that despite positive consequences, there are also negative consequences. The dysfunction occurred becomes one of the basic assumptions supporting the thought of structural functionalism which states that in a system, there are parts functional to each other. If one part of the system is not functional, it will disturb the balance of the whole existing system. There are two possibilities which may happen, the part will disappear by itself or the system

stops and changes into a new system which doesn't need the dysfunctional part.

In Nasida Ria the dysfunction discussed derives from the new music players. Having taken part in the music industry for almost 4 decades, the players of Nasida ria Ria have already been in their old age. For that reason, the group's regeneration is something inevitable for Nasida Ria. The regeration process at the beginning didn't work easily because Nasida Ria didn't have a good way or strategy in the process of regenerating new members. Another dysfunction was that the new players resulted from the selection didn't get used to the working system and norms in the group. More over the number of the senior members were not small. One example of the dysfunction conducted by the new member is when a new player lacked of the ethic in having relationship with colleagues of different sex, which has long been the existing rule of Nasida Ria as a group bearing muslim preaching mission in every of its performance. Certainly it has to be avoided because it can ruin the group's image. Another thing which can be considered as a dysfunction of the player is when the new player is too long in adapting to the way the seniors play the music on stage. This becomes a typical hindrance and obstacle for other members of the group.

#### **Latent Function**

Latent function is the unexpected function (alimanda, 1992). The definition of this function is everything unexpected by every element in Nasida Ria, including the group's manager, composer, players, and fans. From the interview, it was found that all elements in Nasida Ria do not want if this group stops performing. For the manager, composer, and the players of Nasida Ria, the group is their vehicle to earn a living and their place to voice Islamic preaching through songs.

#### **Manifest Function**

Manifest function is the expected function (alimanda, 1992). This function has a definition as all things expected by all elements in Nasida Ria, including its manager, composer,

players, and also its fans. Almost all of the elements in the group has a desire and hope that Nasida Ria will exist, be able to reach popularity like what it ever experienced in the 90's, and will soon be able to release its new album, the 35th album of Nasida Ria.

#### **Balance**

According to the theory of structural functionalism in Alimanda (1992; 31), a community or a group will always change gradually by maintaining balance. The case in this study occurred when Nasida Ria as a musical group experienced dysfunction at the time of its member regeneration process. However, by applying good communication and emphasizing on the feeling to have a close and warm atmosphere as in a family between the elements and members of Nasida Ria, all of the problems in the regeneration process could be overcome. In addition to that, every element in Nasida Ria has completely been functional to each other. This later creates the balance in the group, Nasida Ria, which makes the group be able to keep its existence until now.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Nasida Ria has been able to maintain the continuation of the group for almost four decades. It was because every member in the group management played his or her role well and was functional between one and another. Each member of the group was also, as possible as he or she could, to avoid a harmful latent function and to be dysfunctional among the members. The manager did his function well as a leader and made a decision for every activity. The music composer worked well, meaning that he did his duty well from the stage of rehearsal to the stage performance when the group entertained its fans. The fan had a function as an appreciator and an economic factor. Therefore, the dysfunction occurred on the group's regeneration could be overcome in a close and warm atmosphere as in a family. This is what has made a balance in the group which causes Nasida Ria to be exist until now. This is in line

with the point of view of the structural functionalism stated by Robert K. Merton.

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