

Indonesian Piano Composition In History Of Music

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Abstract: The existence of Indonesian piano music has a relationship with piano music in Europe, this can certainly be obtained through a study of the use of forms, materials, textures and techniques used by Indonesian piano composers in compositional activities. The extent to which the relationship between the development of Indonesian piano music with piano music in Europe can be done with the approach of historical musicology studies, namely studies related to the history of music, including studies of notation, performance practices and instrumentation. The assessment stage begins by first selecting a number of composers who are considered to represent the periodization in Western music (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern), then do an analysis to the level of compositional concepts (both related to ideas and musical characters). After that, we examine the extent of the relationship of Indonesian piano music in the development trajectory of piano music in Europe. We conclude that Indonesian piano composers can be positioned and included in the Modern era. An interesting thing found from the works of Indonesian piano composers (Amir Pasaribu, Mochtar Embut, Trisutji Kamal, Jaya Suprana, and Jaya Suprana) is in the use of forms, melodies, textures and rhythms that are not bound to a particular music periodization. Indonesian piano composers broke out of standard music conventions in the Baroque and Classical periods by changing forms, according to their individuality. The findings of this study are the composition of the Indonesian piano closer to the style of the composition of the romantic period.

Keywords: composition, composer, Indonesian piano, analysis, history

1. Introduction

Music can take us to a different world, encourage us to dance, or remind us of certain things without ever asking further, why, when, or where the music comes from. Therefore, we will find diverse opinions from the public about the music they hear. Can be included in the category of traditional music, popular music, and classical music. In the current context, we will also find opinions that say that music is understood as universal music or world music that is no longer limited by

conventional canons as where they were originally created.

In general, world music often refers to traditional or folk music; (a) created and played by original musicians; (b) naturally combines other forms of music; and (c) a part of almost every culture and society on the planet. A more concise definition is that world music includes many forms of music from various cultures that remain informed or guided by original music from their home region. Ideally, all music is recognized as world music. For example, Western classical music forms the basis and element in much of the world's music (Nidel, 2005). Apart from that perspective, there is actually still room for debate and discussion, whether each type of music can be categorized into world music or universal music? This certainly will require a lot of thought and time to discuss it in depth.

The author tries to limit himself to not enter the perspective of world music. The author offers a discourse on the phenomenon of creating serious musical works in Indonesia to enter the trajectory of music history (specifically for piano composition works.) This discourse is inseparable from the reality, where Indonesian piano compositions have been part of music performances in Indonesia for almost nine decades, however, until now there has been no researcher who researched on how the composition of Indonesian pianos to be placed in the history of world piano music. In fact, this is a strategic and important step to take, so that Indonesian piano composition works can be more widely known internationally as a reflection of national identity through the use of musical idioms.

Several studies related to the biography of Indonesian piano composers have also been conducted by previous researchers, such as; First, Kismiyati in her thesis entitled "Komponis dan Pianis Wanita Indonesia Trisutji Kamal: Sebuah Demografi" discussing the educational journey to the role of Trisutji Kamal in the development of music in Indonesia; second, Nathalia in her thesis "Kajian Tekstual *The Drupadi Trilogy* Karya Ananda Sukarlan" discusses the relationship between compositional works and habitus and the interrelation of Indonesian traditional elements with Western music in them, and see the role of works as an identity for the composers themselves; and third, Sitorus in his thesis "Biografi Amir Pasaribu dan Pemikiran-Pemikirannya dalam Bidang Seni dan Budaya" discuss Amir Pasaribu's position as a music expert, composer, critic, thinker and pianist. These three studies can be used as initial information, especially in terms of music education from the development of the concept of the creation of their compositional works.

1.1. Significance of the study

The results of this study are particularly useful for pianists, musicians, and students studying piano music in Indonesia. Through this paper, they will be helped to understand the style of Indonesian piano compositions through the

composition ideas of Amir Pasaribu, Mochtar Embut, Trisutji Kamal, Ananda Sukarlan and Jaya Suprana. The study of Indonesian piano composition helps us to see the expansion of sound colors, melodies, scales, and harmony.

1.2. Scope and Limitation of the study

Research is always faced with time and cost limitations. Therefore, the authors realize that it is necessary to limit the scope of research. The focus of research is about the composition of the Indonesian piano.

2. Research Design And Methodology

In general, this study uses qualitative research with a historical approach. The author studies various secondary data to see the development of Western piano music. The author then chooses several composers who represent the Western music period (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern) and see the main stream of the concept of composition they have inherited for each period. After that, the writer analyzes the composition of the Indonesian piano to later discover the style of the Indonesian piano composition and easing of the conventional music canon.

3. Findings And Conclusions

The author's experience when studying about the history of Western music is by examining a variety of literature about music history from various perspectives. The author then discovers differences in information from the existing literature, even though they both discuss the same topic (for example, romantic music). Seeing this, the question arises, which is the correct information among these books? After the passage of time, the writer then understands the reason for the difference in information from the books that were read at that time. Because, talking about the history of music, it is a memory that is made scientific. So, the extent to which the author of the book gets information about something that has passed, will be in line with what he wrote. Differences in information between fellow book authors are natural, and can provide more diverse information. Music history is inseparable from musical works composed by composers, guides for concerts or operas. The problem of music history, lies in the works of music and aesthetics (Dahlhaus, 1983).

3.1. Western Piano Compositions from Time to Time

Western piano composers by period are divided into four periods; Baroque (represented by composers Henry Purcell and Johann Sebastian Bach); Classical (represented by composers Franz Joseph Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart); Romantic (represented by composers Ludwig van Beethoven, Felix Mendelssohn, Johannes Brahms, Frédéric Chopin, Franz Liszt and Robert Schumann); and Modern (represented by composers Claude Debussy, Paul Hindemith, Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Rachmaninoff, and John Cage.)

Bach is a prolific German composer and organist, both sacred and secular music composed for choirs, orchestras and solo instruments. Bach is a strong composer in contrapuntal techniques, harmonic organizational control, development of motifs from the smallest to largest scale, adaptation of rhythm and texture, especially from Italy and France (Carter, 2008). The piano instrument for Bach was a new thing in his life and in his time was not generally used until after his death. Bach only composed one piano piece entitled *Musical Offering*, however Bach's music has become an important part of piano music repertoire. *Well-Tempered Clavier* (BWV 846-893) is Bach's most influential composition, divided into two parts, namely; *Prelude* and *Fugue*. Other important Bach compositions are *English Suita*, *French Suita* and *Partitas*.

Purcell is the best British musician after William Byrd and the last British composer before the 20th century. Purcell in his lifetime, which was classified as short writing sacred, instrumental, and theater music, as well as twenty-nine *Welcome Songs* for the kingdom. Purcell combines original traditions, represented by the music of William Byrd, Thomas Weelkes, and others with French and Italian music. Twenty-two sonata trios have been allocated according to catalog numbers Z. 790 to Z. 811 (in the Zimmerman analytic catalog.)

Haydn is a composer considered important from the classical period that follows the Baroque and Rococo periods. He is often portrayed as the father of the symphony and string quartet, and is a significant classical composer for the piano. The composition of the piano does not occupy the most prominent position in the composition of Haydn's work. Haydn concentrated more on the composition of string quartets, symphonies and several vocal genres. Among the piano works, there are fifty-two solo piano sonatas and are important works. Most of these works present a uniform character; closely

related to the Viennese suites. The initial sonata composition usually consists of three movements (only Sonatas No. 6 and 8 have four), all in the same key sign. Sonata compositions that express this new aesthetic are seen in the works *Sonata in G minor* (No. 44); *C minor* (No. 20), *B minor* (No. 32), *E minor* (No. 34), and *C-sharp minor* (No. 36). Haydn exploits the quality of passion from the minor scale, strives for something more ambitious that includes a greater level of intensity, and also maintains the traditional external form.

Mozart produced more than 600 compositions including works that are widely recognized as the pinnacle of symphony, concerto, piano, opera and choir music. Mozart is one of the most popular classical composers and many of his works become a standard concert repertoire. Mozart's piano sonatas still maintain a three-movement scheme that remains the norm, where the second movement uses *minuets*; the first and final movements use the *sonata* principle. The character, style and technique of Mozart's piano sonatas constantly change, this theme applies throughout the composition.

Beethoven was an important figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras. Beethoven at the beginning of his work inherited certain styles and forms of music that developed during the Haydn and Mozart periods, but at a certain stage, Beethoven then developed new compositional concepts. Beethoven was a pianist, emphasizing his musical composition for solo piano, sonata in particular, as important as other compositional genres. Beethoven wrote piano sonatas more or less continuously throughout his career.

Mendelssohn is a composer, pianist and conductor. His compositional works include solo piano music, chamber music, symphonies, concerto, and oratorio. Mendelssohn composed three piano sonatas, *Sonata in G minor* arranged in three parts in the form of *sonata form*. *Sonata in E major* (op. 6) consists of four movements that must be played without pauses. It also displays a *cyclic form*, given the main theme of the first movement appears at the end of the *finale* movement. In addition to the *sonata form*, Mendelssohn's composition often uses the *rondo* form in the first and last movements; the second movement (in slow tempo) is a *minuet*; and the third movement is an *adagio* in the style of *fantasia*, using a recitative style marked *senza misura*, with contrasting portions.

Brahms is considered a musician who opposed the music of Liszt and

Wagner, known as the Neo-German school with its emphasis on the expression of extramusical material. Brahms is often considered the last great composer in the German Classical tradition, which looks back through Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn to Bach. When the trend of composition led to programmatic music, Brahms refused to see himself as a “modern” composer. The Brahms conservative attitude which is essential in most of his music for piano is seen in the use of pre-existing forms (*sonatas* and *variations*), then, Brahms comes to various types of characters in composition.

Chopin devoted himself to piano composition and avoided symphonic, opera and oratorio compositions. Chamber music is represented by *sonata for cello and piano* and *piano trio*; it is piano music and especially genres related to character works. Character works, (including *nocturne*, *impromptu*, *intermezzo*, and *ballade*), Chopin composed *etude*, *prelude*, and *dance* (*mazurka*, *polonaise*, *waltz*). Chopin also composed larger forms of the older tradition of, three sonatas and two sets of variations. The *Etude* composition is basically a work for teaching or training designed as a vehicle for pianists to improve their technical abilities. *Etude* Chopin resembles works with virtuoso characters.

The most important characteristic of Schumann is the power between literature and music. Schumann emerged as a strong supporter of new forms of Romantic music and avoided virtuoso performances. Schumann composed three sonatas, several etudes, and variations. Schumann gave the character far more attention, functioning as the locus of his most representative works. Schumann's three sonata works consist of four movements, according to the conception of the genre as has been done by Beethoven and Schubert before. Schumann also maintains conventional key relationships between movements. In addition to the works of sonatas, Schumann also wrote works of *fantasia*. *Fantasia* holds an important position among Schumann's piano works. *Fantasia* Schumann is a different work, because it consists of the same multi-movements as the work of *sonatas*.

Liszt made his reputation primarily as a pianist, identifying himself with Romanticism. The development and exploitation of techniques became important in Liszt's career as a composer. Liszt became the first pianist to appear alone, without assistance, for the entire concert. Liszt developed an entirely new playing style for piano instruments, Liszt exploits the capacity of instruments in an unheard of way by using a fast and colorful register change; use tight chords and octave sections in all registers, often associated with wide jumps, arpeggios throughout the keyboard, scale in three, six, octaves, and even in full, diatonic and colored chords; creating complicated cadenza and recitative parts; add vibrato configuration; and often putting melodies in

the middle register accompanied by difficult figurations. In these works Liszt's expertise can be found in all extremes and varieties; the most difficult element of piano technique is found here. The term “*transcendental*”, the level of difficulty beyond other *etude* at that time. Another important work is the famous Rhapsodies Hongroises (Hungarian Rhapsodies). Liszt combines virtuoso techniques with Hungarian gypsy melodies, which are considered as authentic Hungarian voices.

Debussy is a French composer and pianist and, together with Maurice Ravel, is considered one of the most prominent figures in the Impressionist music field. His investigation of sensual new pitch colors for the orchestra and piano, the development of rich new harmonies, and new ways to express emotions in music, all remind us of the Romantic period. Debussy's early piano works such as Mazurka (L. 67), and Rêverie (L. 68) still reflect the characteristics of Bohemia and Russia. Novelty comes with slow motion, *Clair de lune in D-flat major* is the most popular piano work and is also the first real example of impressionist piano music. *Pour le Piano* is composed with a new harmony and neoclassical orientation, in which genre, form, and style (Prelude, Sarabande, and Toccata) in fact go back to the 18th century concept.

Hindemith is not included as a professional pianist, but he still composes works for pianos with piano characters that move away from traditional principles. The composition of Hindemith in large form is; Suite 1922 (op. 26), consisting of five movements (*March, Schimmy, Nachtstück, Boston, and Ragtime*). Hindemith has replaced the traditional dance suite with contemporary forms and aria with *nocturne*. His impersonal and objective attitude appears in the instructions for Ragtime - play this song very wildly but with a tight rhythm, like a machine. Think of the piano as an interesting percussion instrument and act according to it. Hindemith then composed the toccata for the piano (op. 40, 1926) which might better approach its performance ideals with a machine.

Stravinsky was influenced by the legacy of Western Classics, his work had a profound effect on twentieth-century music. His innovation began with three famous ballets for the *Russes Ballets* in Paris and continued without interruption by switching to neoclassicism in the early 1920s and the last was the adoption of the Schoenberg serial writing method. An interesting work of piano sonatas is that there is a change in the concept of composition discourse by Stravinsky. Previously, sonatas were composed in many nationalistic and neoclassical traditions in the nineteenth century, an “objective” work in three movements. Using long-time succession (Fast-Slow-Fast). Stravinsky in the composition of sonatas uses the form of small sonatas with insignificant development, simple, well-known structures that feature melodies with a lot

of ornamentation. Stravinsky also composed music for *piano duets*, including, *Polka, March, Waltz, "Española"* "Napolitana" and "Galop".

Rachmaninoff was one of the great virtuoso pianists, composers and conductors in the first half of the twentieth century. His style of composition and appearance is deeply rooted in nineteenth-century musical values. The emphasis of the work on the themes of lyrics and harmony is rich in the traditional tone system. Rachmaninoff arranged twenty-four Prelude and divided it into three parts. The famous work is *Prelude in C-sharp minor* (op. 3 ii). This work is generally composed for the study of virtuoso characteristics. Rachmaninoff wrote four piano concerto and Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini for piano solos and symphonic orchestras. The composition of a large solo piano includes two sonatas, op. 28 and op. 36. *Variations on a Theme of Corelli* and *Variations on a Theme of Chopin*. The composition of a short solo piano consists of seventeen in *Études-tableaux*, op. 33 and 39.

Cage, a consistent musician from the musical avant garde. Noteworthy works are the famous composition 4'33", first performed by pianist David Tudor. Another composition work, *Metamorphosis* uses radical procedures of its time, strictly maintaining structural principles which involve the restatement of rhythmic units. Cage developed the piano from various materials placed between the piano strings so that it affects sound transformation. Materials used include screws, bolts, erasers, and rubber bands that are installed or inserted between strings at a certain distance according to the chart included with the score. Music is notated and the piano is played the normal way, but the sound of the instrument has been radically modified, so that it often resembles gamelan.

3.2. Indonesian Piano Composition

Indonesian piano composers treat a variety of archipelago musical idioms are not merely 'imitations', then lend them or move them in the piano works they write. Previous composers have studied the characters of these Nusantara music idioms well and become part of their own mother tongue. They are also involved and experience a variety of real musical activities through art education in schools and musical performances. After all the processes have been undertaken, they have reached the stage of creativity in composition, what they experience and learn (about Indonesian music) during the process in the realm of culture will have implications for the originality of their work.

Composers practice experiments on archipelago music idioms. They took

elements of traditional music and folk music from various regions in Indonesia to be used as musical material in piano compositions. Nusantara music that is varied and perfect in its form has expressive power in its initial context, then assimilated in such a way that it becomes an artistic piano work (listeners can still recognize the source of musical idioms which are assimilated in the work of piano compositions compiled by Indonesian composers.)

The Modern Era

Debussy	Rachmaninoff	Stravinsky	Hindemith	Cage	Amir	Embut	Trisutji	Suprana	Sukarlana
1862-1918	1873-1943	1882-1971	1895-1963	1912-1992	1915-2010	1934-1973	1936-	19-	1968-
Etude, Prelude, Suita, Toccata, Sherzo, Tango, Music for piano Variation on a thema Bebas / ekspresimen Bebas / ekspresimen Impresionis, simbolis, kompleksitas, serialis, atonal Intens					Suita, Sonata, Fantasia, Rambadia, Etude, Fragmen, Variasi, Rapsodia Nusantara longgar sesuai dengan individualitas komponis Polifonik, homofonik Emosional, Impresionis, kompleksitas Variatif, rubato				

Based on the table, the author comes to the conclusion that Indonesian piano composers can be positioned in the Modern era in the history of Western music. An interesting thing found from the works of Indonesian piano composers (Amir Pasaribu, Mochtar Embut, Trisutji Kamal, Jaya Suprana, and Ananda Sukarlan) is in the use of forms, scale, melodies, textures and rhythms which are not bound to a particular music periodization. Their composition works tend to lead to romantic music styles with their respective individuality.

4. Recommendations

First, we have room to discuss the composition of Indonesian piano into the track of world music history. Second, the composition of the Indonesian piano can be used as an alternative in piano education in Indonesia and become a reporter of choice for world pianists.

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