

PERSAGI PERSAGI

Sudarmaji

Munculnya Persagi dalam kontinuitas sejarah seni rupa Indonesia, merupakan gejala yang agak spesifik. Spesifikasi itu dirasakan sebagai pertumbuhan cepat dalam jangka pendek. Persagi muncul hanya dari Oktober 1938 sampai datangnya penjajahan Jepang tahun 1942. Dengan datangnya Jepang semua macam organisasi harus bubar dan diganti oleh buatan Jepang. Hanya, memang dengan bubarnya organisasi Persagi yang singkatan dari Persatuan Ahli-Ahli Gambar Indonesia tidak berarti lenyapnya aspirasi Persagi di sektor seni rupa. Aspirasi itu tetap gaungnya sampai seputar tahun tujuh puluhan. Sesudah itu muncul dengan meyakinkan macam ragam aspirasi dan wawasan dalam dunia seni rupa. Aspirasi yang pernah dominan dari Persagi ialah mencari corak nasional dalam seni rupa.

KONDISI LINGKUNGAN

Kondisi dominan lingkungan masa kelahiran Persagi adalah sesuatu yang logis jika dikaitkan dengan aspirasi Persagi. Pada pendapat penulis ada tiga butir. Pertama lingkungan politik; dua, kultural dan ketiga situasi pendidikan bangsa.

1. Latar belakang politik

Situasi politik waktu itu diliputi demam demokrasi, disamping jatuh banggunya organisasi-organisasi politik itu sendiri. Tuntutan agar bangsa rakyat, bahkan menuntut Indonesia Merdeka, semakin santer. Gerindo (Gerakan Indonesia) lahir di bawah pimpinan Mr. Amir Syarifuddin dan Adnan Kapau Gani. Sebelumnya telah dilebur organisasi yang bersifat kedaerahan seperti Jong Java, Jong Sumatranen Bond, Sekar Rukun, Jong Ambon dan lain sebagainya menjadi Indonesia Muda.¹⁾

Gerakan wanita Indonesia kecuali memperjuangkan hak kaum wanita, ikut juga memperjuangkan Indonesia Merdeka seperti Isteri-Sedar, Isteri Indonesia, Puteri Budi Sejati dan Aisyah.

Karena cita-cita untuk memerintah sendiri dalam arti kata seluasnya belum dipenuhi penjajah Belanda, maka pada tahun 1937 Sutarjo Kartohadikusumo mengajukan kepada Belanda semacam petisi yang isinya menuntut status dominion untuk bangsa Indonesia. Tuntutan itu ditolak. Efeknya menjadikan bangsa

The appearance of Persatuan Ahli-Ahli Gambar Indonesia or Persagi within the continuity of the history of Indonesian art constitutes a somewhat specific phenomenon. Specific in the sense that it developed within such a short period. Persagi first appeared in October 1938 and disappeared with the initiation of the Japanese occupation in 1942. The Japanese required that all types of existing organizations be replaced with those set up by the occupation forces. However the dissolution of Persagi, the union of Indonesian artists, did not mean the disappearance of the organization's aspirations in the fine arts sector. The echoes of these aspirations were heard into the 1970s. After that a variety of other convincing aspirations and views appeared in the world of fine art. But the dominant aspiration of the Persagi artists' was the desire to discover a "national character" in the fine arts.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

The dominant environmental conditions in the period which gave birth to Persagi seem to have a logical relationship to Persagi's aspirations. In my opinion there were three dominant conditions, the first being the political environment, the second the cultural situation, and third, the educational conditions of the people.

1. The political background

The political situation at that time was affected by a fever of democracy, besides the rise and fall of political organizations. The demands that the Indonesian people be given equal rights and representation, and even demands for Indonesia's independence, were increasingly strident. Gerindo (Gerakan Indonesia or Indonesian Movement) was born under the leadership of Amir Syarifuddin and Adnan Kapau Gani. Before this regional organizations like Jong Java, Jong Sumatranen Bond, Sekar Rukun, Jong Ambon and others had been dissolved and consolidated into Indonesia Muda.¹⁾

The Indonesian women's movements, besides struggling for women's rights, also joined the fight for an Independent Indonesia. Among these groups were Isteri Sedar, Isteri Indonesia, Puteri Budi Sejati and Aisyah.

Because the ambition of the Indonesian people to fully govern themselves had not yet been allowed by the Dutch colonial powers, in 1937 Sutarjo Kartohadikusumo presented

Indonesia semakin menggejolak dan membara api. Lebih lagi serta diketahui bahwa mendung peperangan Dunia ke II semakin menebal di Eropa Barat dengan Jerman di bawah Nazi Hitler mulai menggulung Austria, Cekoslovakia dan mulai pacak baris di muka gerbang Polandia, memperhatikan peta politik Eropa Barat bangsa Indonesia yang mulai melihat Belanda ketakutan dalam posisi dan situasi itu, makin menyadarkan pentingnya Indonesia Merdeka dan makin melihat bahwa Belanda sesungguhnya kecil saja.

2. Latar belakang kultural

Setelah pada tahun 1932 dicoba dalam majalah Panji Pustaka rubrik memajukan kesusasteraan yang dipimpin Takdir Alisyahbana, maka pada tahun 1933 lahirlah sebuah berkala sastra Pujangga Baru yang mengobarkan semangat dan bentuk baru di bidang sastra. Di bawah inisiatif Takdir Alisyahbana yang dinamis dan terkadang militan, terjadilah polemik kebudayaan yang riuh rendah dalam media massa. Media yang ambil peranan ialah: Pujangga Baru, Suara Umum, Warta Deli dan Wasita, di mana turun gelanggang: Takdir Alisyahbana, Adinegoro, Dr. Sutomo, Dr. Amir Dewantara, DR. R.M. Purbocaroko, Sanusi Pane dan Cindar Bumi²⁾ berlangsung dari tahun 1935-1939. Ialah kurun waktu polemik/berdiskusi yang cukup lama. Gejala sastra dikemukakan di sini karena yang mengambil peranan ialah para budayawan terkemuka waktu itu, dengan empat buah media massa ikut mengambil peranan pula. Dengan begitu ikut membentuk iklim budaya tertentu yang menunjukkan adanya "revolusi" pandangan yang segar yang berbeda dengan situasi budaya etnis sebelumnya. Tentu saja yang sedemikian besar peranannya di dalam sektor konsepsi budaya.

Sektor seni lukis yang sejaman banyak mengambil peranan banyak tokoh baik asing maupun bangsa Indonesia sendiri. Tokoh itu ialah: Lee Man Fong, Ui Tiang Un, Henk Ngantung, Siauw Tik Kwie, Pirngadi, Subanto, Imandt, Jan Frank, P. Ouborg, Rudolf Bonnet, Walter Spies, Ch. Sayers, G.P. Adolfs, E. Dezentje, C. Dake dan banyak lagi³⁾.

S. Sudjojono, dalam konstatasinya yang tajam berdasar atas gejala seni rupa hasil karya tokoh di muka menulis karangan-karangannya dalam harian kala itu yang lalu dikumpulkan dalam buku tipisnya: *Seni Loekis, Kesenian dan Seniman*, Penerbit Indonesia Sekarang, Yogyakarta. Dalam *Almanak Seni* terbitan Badan Musyawarah Kebudayaan Jakarta 1956 halaman 126 tertulis antara lain:

Aliran itu (maksudnya aliran yang oleh Sudjojono disebut *Mooi Indie*, penulis) dengan sadar atau tidak; hanya sampai ke pemuasan selera publik yang dangkal,

a petition to the Dutch containing a demand for a dominant status for Indonesians. This demand was rejected. The result was that the fire of desire for independence flared up and spread through the entire Indonesian populace. This situation was also influenced by the knowledge that the clouds of World War II were thickening in Western Europe, with Germany under the leadership of Adolf Hitler's Nazis occupying Austria and Czechoslovakia and preparing to advance on Poland. As Indonesians observed the political map of Europe they became aware of Holland's fears arising from its position and situation at that time. They also became aware of the importance of Indonesia's independence and the fact that the Netherlands was insignificant.

2. Cultural background

In 1932 the experimental publication of the "advance literature" column under the direction of Takdir Alisyahbana was begun in the Panji Pustaka magazine. Then in 1933 the emergence of the literary periodical Pujangga Baru, fanned enthusiasm and motivated new forms in the field of literature. Under the initiative of the dynamic, often militant Takdir Alisyahbana, a boisterous cultural polemic began in the mass media. The periodicals involved were: Pujangga Baru, Suara Umum, Perwarta Deli dan Wasita, with Takdir Alisyahbana, Adinegoro, Dr. Sutomo, Dr. Amir, Dewantara, Dr. R.M. Purbocaroko, Sanusi Pane and Cindar Bumi²⁾ taking part in the exchange of views from 1935 to 1939. This constituted a fairly lengthy period for discussion. This phenomena in literature occurred because those taking part were among the best known scholars and intellectuals of the period and their ideas were being exposed in four different publications. In this way a new cultural climate, different from the previous ethnic cultural situation was formed, indicating a "revolution" of fresh attitudes had occurred. This, of course, had a major impact on the concepts of culture.

The fine art sector of the same period also took a role, with both Indonesian and foreign artists involved. These fine arts figures were: Lee Man Fong, Ui Tiang Un, Henk Ngantung, Siauw Tik Kwie, Pirngadi, Subanto, Imandt, Jan Frank, P. Ouborg, Rudolf Bonnet, Walter Spies, Ch. Sayers, G.P. Adolf, E. Dezentje, C. Dake and many others.³⁾

S. Sudjojono's sharply evaluative and critical articles on the trends in the work being produced by well known artists were printed in various dailies and later appeared in the collection entitled *Seni Loekis, Kesenian dan Seniman*, published by Penerbit Indonesia Sekarang, Yogyakarta. And in *Almanak Seni* published by the Badan Musyawarah Kebudayaan Jakarta in 1956, in which on page 126, Sudjojono wrote:

That style (in reference to "Mooi Indie", or "beautiful Indies") consciously, or unconsciously, only achieves the pleasing of the public's shallow, quasi-romantic and erotic

quasi romantis dan erotis yang dicari-cari. Kecantikan dibekukan dalam alam cetakan : sawah-gunung yang manis mewakili alam Indonesia dan istimewa pada Basuki Abdullah, perempuan-perempuan molek-montok separuh telanjang ala Hollywood, mewakili manusia Indonesia. Terang sebagai barang pasaran tidak berisi, pun merusak rasa seni bangsa kita.

Para pelukis Indonesia muda yang berkelompok dalam Persagi menganggap cita rasa pelukis Mooi Indie tersebut perlu diluruskan dengan mencari dan mendapatkan corak seni rupa Indonesia yang spesifik. Khas hasil karya bangsa Indonesia.

3. Latar Belakang Pendidikan

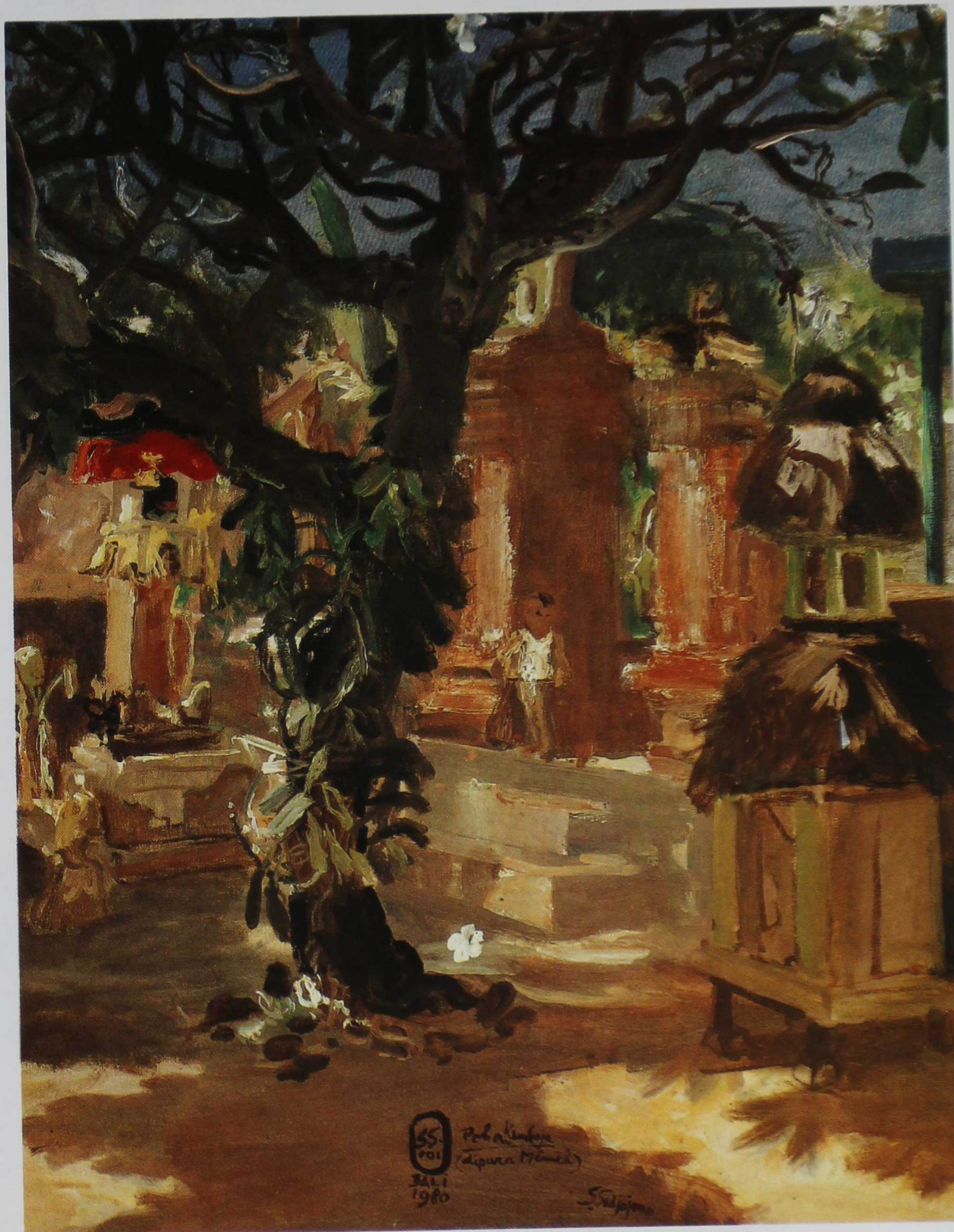
Setelah melewati Indische Partij Soewardi Soerjaningrat alias Dewantara itu ditutup jalannya oleh pemerintahan penjajahan Belanda untuk mengobarkan semangat kebangsaan, maka dilihat jalan baru yang pada pikirannya tidak kalah ampuhnya. Jalan baru itu ialah lewat jalur pendidikan. Maka pada tahun 1922 oleh Dewantara dan kawan kawan, didirikan Perguruan Taman Siswa. Dari tahun 1922 hingga 1937 sudah merata tumbuh cabang-cabangnya di seluruh Jawa dan beberapa di Sumatera. Program pendidikannya nasionalistis yang mendasarkan kepada kesenian bangsa sendiri. Metoda pembinaannya yang dikenal sebagai sistem Among (keterangan tidak dengan cara memaksa melainkan seperti mengasuh anak sendiri) berdasar wawasan tumbuh menurut kodrat. Dalam sistem itu, maka pengajaran berarti pendidikan anak akan menjadi manusia yang merdeka batinnya, merdeka pikirannya dan merdeka tenaganya. (Sepak terjangnya, Penulis.)

⁴⁾ Oleh Taman Siswa, pelajaran kesenian sangat diperhatikan. Kesenian yang tumbuh dan berakar dari seni budaya sendiri. Sebagai hasil rekayasanya, Taman Siswa berhasil menyelenggarakan pameran seni lukis untuk murid-muridnya pada tahun 1927. Dan motor Persagi S. Sudjojono memang tamatan Taman Guru Taman Siswa, dan pernah mengajar di sekolah-sekolah Taman Siswa antara lain di Rogojampi, Jawa Timur.

LAHIRNYA PERSAGI

Di muka telah dikemukakan latar belakang politik yang dijiwai semangat kebangsaan dan kemerdekaan. Di sektor sastra, para sastrawan bercita-cita mendobrak konvensi lama dan beku untuk melahirkan corak yang baru. Di bidang pendidikan maka aspirasi dan asas kebangsaan tumbuh semakin kokoh.

Berlainan dengan kemajuan di ketiga sektor dikemukakan terdahulu, S. Sudjojono, Agus Djaja, Abdulsalam, Rameli dan kawan-kawan lain melihat betapa gersangnya bidang seni rupa. Hanya muncul wawasan Mooi Indie yang turistik. Ada beberapa tamatan akademi Negeri Belanda antara lain Basuki Abdullah.



tastes in a forced manner. Beauty is frozen in the mechanical reproduction of nature: sweet-looking rice fields and mountains represent Indonesia's nature, and particularly in the case of the works of Basoeeki Abdullah, well-built, pretty, half-naked young women a la Hollywood, represent the people of Indonesia. It is clear that as an empty market commodity, this kind of art is ruining the sense of art of our people. The young Indonesian artists who gathered in felt that the taste of the Mooi Indie painters required improvement through the seeking out of a specifically Indonesian style of art. A specific art of the people of Indonesia.

3. Educational background

After the Indische Partij of Suwardi Suryaningrat, who was also known as Dewantara, was closed by the colonial government, new, similarly effective, channels for the motivating of a nationalistic spirit were sought. The educational sector seemed to offer opportunities. In 1922 Dewantara and friends set up the Taman Siswa educational

S. Sudjojono,
Tafel Pulau Bali.

S. Sudjojono,
Scenery of Bali.



Di sektor pendidikan ada R.J. Katamsi dan Sjafei Sumarja. Keduanya menjadi guru-guru sekolah menengah atas waktu itu (AMS). Dan kesemuanya tidak menggembirakan kaum yang bersemangat dan berjiwa muda. Para pelukis yang nantinya bergabung dalam Persagi, kebanyakan para pelukis untuk bidang reklame di percetakan. Atau calon pelukis muda sama sekali yang ketrampilan nya di sektor melukis masih baru dan baru belajar awal. Modal mereka bukan didikan akademi seni rupa, melainkan lebih mengandalkan semangatnya. Guru yang akan membina mereka tidak ada. Guru mereka ialah mereka sendiri. Saling menjadi guru dan murid. Jika seseorang mempunyai pengetahuan yang lebih mengenai perspektif dan anatomi, akan ditularkan kepada yang lain. Juga mengenai bentuk. Mengenai warna. Atau hal-ikhwal yang bersangkutan paut dengan ilmu kemasyarakatan, ilmu jiwa atau filsafat. Mereka akan saling bertukar ilmu dan pengalaman.

Itulah dapat difahami; karena kondisi yang sedemikian, Agus Djaja dan S. Sudjojono dalam membesarkan hati sesama anggota atau kader Persagi untuk tidak terlalu menghiraukan teknik lukis, selain lebih dahulu berani melukis. Semboyan ekstrimnya ialah : Teknik tidak penting. Yang penting isi jiwa ini tumpah di atas kanvas. Suromo salah seorang kader

institution. And from 1922 to 1937 branches of this institution sprang up throughout Java and parts of Sumatra. Taman Siswa's nationalistic educational program was based on the arts of the people of Indonesia themselves. The educational method employed was known as *Among* (with information not being forced upon the children, but being presented in a nurturing manner as if to one's own child) which was based in the concept that children should develop in line with their own characters.

In this system, teaching meant that the children would be educated in such a way as to produce independent, active people with an independent spirit and way of thinking.⁴⁾ Taman Siswa paid a great deal of attention to the study of the arts. The arts were those which had sprung up from and had roots in the culture of the people themselves. As a result of its efforts and activities Taman Siswa held a painting exhibition of works done by its students in 1927.

The driving force behind Persagi, S. Sudjojono, had been educated at Taman Siswa, and had also taught in Taman Siswa schools, among others, the one in Rogojampi, East Java.

THE BIRTH OF PERSAGI

The political background which colored the spirit of nationalism and independence of the period has been described above. In the literary sector, the writers had the ambition of breaking through the stiff old conventions in order to bring forth new styles. In the educational sector the aspirations and principles of the people became increasingly firm.

S. Sudjojono, Agus Djaja, Abdulsalam, Rameli and others observed that the fine art sector remained barren in comparison to the three previously mentioned sectors, in which advances had been made. Only the touristic *Mooi Indie* concept was apparent. There were several graduates of Dutch art academies actively painting, among them Basoeki Abdullah. In the educational sector R.J. Katamsi and Syafei Sumarja were active. Both taught in the AMS secondary school system. And none of these figures pleased the group imbued with the spirit and energy of youth. The artists, who would come together in Persagi, were mostly involved in the printing and advertising sectors. Or they were budding painters who were newly experiencing the fine arts sector and only just learning to paint. They were not academy educated, they depended more on their enthusiasm. No teacher was available to instruct them. They were their own teachers. They taught each other, in turn becoming either instructor, or student. If one person knew more than the others about perspective, anatomy, shape or color, he would pass the knowledge on to the others. Or if one knew more about sociological, psychological or philosophic matters he would share this with the others. They exchanged both information and their experiences in this manner.

This can be understood because the situation was such

.Harijadi ,
Awan Berarak, Jalan
Bersimpang.

.Harijadi ,
Marching Clouds.

Persagi menulis :

Yang perlu isi hati keluar semua. Keluar dengan cara apa dan cara siapa tidak penting. Pekerjaan seni bukan kepandaian teknik, bukan kepandaiannya melukis, tetapi kata hati yang padat karena banyak menahan.⁵⁾

Anggota Persagi dapat disebutkan : Agus Djaja (merangkap Ketua, S. Sudjojono (pernah jadi Sekretaris), L. Setijoso, Rameli, Abdulsalam, S. Sudiardjo, Saptarita Latif, H. Hutagalung, S. Tutur, Sindusisworo, T.B. Ateng Rusy'an, Syuaib Sastradiwirja, Sukirno, dan Suromo. Ada sebuah sumber yang menyebutkan bahwa Wakidi (di Sumatera) dan Hendrodjasmoro merupakan anggota di luar Jakarta, yang terpaksa mengirimkan melalui poswessel untuk membayar iuran. Tujuan perjuangan Persagi ialah : Mengembangkan seni lukis di kalangan bangsa Indonesia dengan mencari corak Indonesia Baru.⁶⁾ Ide baru ini pernah dikemukakan oleh S. Sudjojono dengan Sanusi Pane. Waktu itu dikatakan Sanusi Pane menjadi terkejut meskipun menaruh interesse juga.⁷⁾

Dalam memperoleh corak seni Lukis Indonesia baru, ditempuh beragam cara seperti nantinya Otto Djaja yang bersama kakaknya Agus Djaja suka mempelajari relief candi dengan cermat. Maksudnya untuk mendapatkan bentuk, interpretasi mengenai lingkungan dan alam lain sehingga corak seni Lukis Indonesia tidak membebek saja dari yang datang dari Barat. Juga dengan cara mempelajari gambar anak-anak yang masih lugas belum "tercekoki" faham estetis dari sistem estetika Barat.

Metoda belajar yang ditempuh selain melukis bersama, ialah menyelenggarakan diskusi, ceramah, pameran dan memperbincangkan isi majalah seni yang sampai ke Indonesia antara lain : *The Studio* terbitan Inggris dan *de Fakkkel* terbitan Belanda. Sedang Abdulsalam menambah sebuah majalah *Elsevier's Maandshrift*. Kesemuanya memuat esei, kritik dan reproduksi karya seni rupa.

LANGKAH PERSAGI SELANJUTNYA.

Interen organisasi, jelas dapat dilihat betapa anggota Persagi dengan tekun belajar teori dan belajar melukis. Keluar, S. Sudjojono meratakan jalan dengan tulisan-tulisannya yang menghantam pengertian lama, apalagi yang punya watak turistik dengan apresiasi dan nilai baru. Dibicarakannya beberapa tokoh seni Barat antara lain Vincent van Gogh, Cezanne, Marc Chagall, Kathe Kolwitz untuk diketahui visi mereka, pembaruan mereka terhadap sistem nilai sebelumnya. Kebetulan selain melukis sendiri, suka memberi lisan dan berdiskusi, S. Sudjojono suka juga menulis untuk media massa. Pikiran-pikirannya dihimpun menjadi dua buku tipis yang berjudul : *Seni Loekis*,

that Agus Djaja and S. Sudjojono encouraged all Persagi members to go ahead and paint without giving undue emphasis to technical matters. One of their more extreme slogans was: Technique is not important. What is important is the psychological content poured onto the canvas. Suromo, one of the Persagi members, wrote:

What is important is that what is in the heart is poured out. It is not important in what way, or in whose way it is poured out. Art is not technical skill, not the ability to paint, but a heart so full it cannot hold back its contents any longer.⁵⁾

The members of Persagi were: Agus Djaja (chairman), S. Sudjojono (secretary), L. Setiyoso, Rameli, Abdulsalam, S. Sudiardjo, Saptarita Latif, H. Hutagalung, S. Tutur, Sindusisworo, T.B. Ateng Rus'an, Sjaib Sastradiwirja, Sukirno and Suromo. It has also been said that Wakidi (in Sumatera) and Hendrodjasmoro were members living outside Jakarta who sent their membership fees by way of money order.

The goal of Persagi's struggle was: To develop fine art among the Indonesian people through the seeking of a new Indonesian style.⁶⁾ This was initially set forth by S. Sudjojono and Sanusi Pane. At the time it was said that Sanusi Pane was a bit surprised by the idea, but interested all the same.⁷⁾

Several approaches were made towards seeking out a new Indonesian style. Otto Djaja and his older brother Agus Djaja did in-depth studies of the reliefs of temples in order to discover the form, and interpretation of nature inherent there, so that the styles employed in (modern) Indonesian art would not rely entirely on the styles of the West. The study of the art of children, who had yet to be influenced by western aesthetic ideas, was also done.

The method of learning employed by Persagi members involved not only working on their art together, but also the holding of exhibitions, discussions, lectures, and various types of intellectual exchanges on the contents of art⁶⁾ magazines available in Indonesia at that time such as *The Studio* from England and *de Fakkkel*, the Dutch publication.

Abdulsalam then added Elsevier's *Maandshrift* to the material for discussion. All of these magazines contained essays, criticism and reproductions of works of fine art.

PERSAGI'S NEXT STEPS

The internal functioning of the organization can be seen through the interest of the individual members in studying art theories and painting. Sudjojono cleared the way for outside activities by writing articles which attacked the established ideas, particularly those with touristic characteristics, with the introduction of a new approach to appreciation and new values. He discussed several western figures in fine art like Vincent Van Gogh, Cezanne, Marc Chagall and Kathe Kolwitz in order to delve into their visions and innovations in relation to previous values. S. Sudjojono was

Kartono Yudokusumo,
Anggrek.

Kartono Yudokusumo,
Orchids.

Kesenian dan Seniman dan Kami Tahu Kemana Seni Loekis Indonesia Akan Kami Bawa yang merupakan kritik Sudjojono terhadap kritikus J. Hopman pada majalah *Uitzicht* di bawah judul "Toekomst van de beeldende kunsten in Indonesia, terbitan zaman pendudukan Belanda Januari 1947. Dalam kritik itu Hopman menyatakan terhadap pameran para bekas penggerak Persagi di Jakarta 1947, dikutip sebagian:

Lukisan itu bahkan tidak bersifat timur, tapi cara melukisnya semata-mata mengikuti seni Barat modern. Lukisan itu bahkan tidak bersifat timur sehingga kita tercengang. Jika lain tentu tak ada orang Indonesia di Jawa yang melukis seperti terlihat dari kedua stelling (pameran) itu.

Tentu saja J. Hopman itu dapat dinilai sebagai asal komentar saja. Dia pun seharusnya mengerti jika tidak ada karya reproduksi seni Jepang ke Eropa dan dilihat Vincent van Gogh, pelukis itu tidak sebesar dan seberpengaruh seperti sekarang dengan ekspresionismenya. Juga yang lain Paul Gauguin ke Tahiti. Delacroix ke Maroko dan Picasso dengan patung-patung Afrikanya. Juga Henri Matisse dengan permadani Persia.

Persagi dengan tokoh S. Sudjojono yang suka berbicara dan menulis telah mengembangkan dunia seni lukis cukup jauh dengan bahasan tentang pentingnya watak seorang pribadi pelukis, katanya :

Setiap orang mempunyai watak sendiri-sendiri. Cara jalan orang yang ini lain dengan cara jalan orang itu. Suara si Anu lain dengan si Itu. Dan kesukaan warna si A, lain dengan si B. Pendek kata corak (style) masing-masing berlainan.⁸⁾

Dalam artikel I: Seni Loekis di Indonesia. Sekarang dan yang Akan Datang dari bukunya, lebih lanjut S. Sudjojono menulis;

Tiap seniman nomor satu mesti berdasar watak seorang seniman. Dan seorang seniman mesti pula berani dalam segala-galanya terutama memberikan ide kepada dunia, meski tidak mendapat tanggapan baik, dari publik sekalipun.

Lalu dalam hubungannya dengan kemegahan zaman silam, sesungguhnya ia melarang kepada angkatan muda untuk menjadi penjiplak atau meniru-niru secara konvensional tanpa andil kreatif. Sebab kesenian yang tinggi ialah pekerjaan yang berasal dari hidup sehari-hari. Diolah dalam hidup si Seniman yang tidak pula keluar dari hidup sehari-hari tadi dan diciptakan, dilemparkan ke khemah dengan tidak mengingat moral atau tradisi. Juga tidak mengingat ini dan itu, melainkan hanya terdorong oleh suatu paksaan dari dalam. Sedang dalam artikel VII



not only interested and active in painting, but also in commenting on and discussing art. He also wrote for the mass media. His thoughts were collected and published in two small books entitled *Seni Loekis, Kesenian dan Seniman* (Fine Art, Art and Artists) and *Kami Tahu Kemana Seni Loekis Indonesia Akan Kami Bawa* (We Know Where We Are Taking Indonesian Art), which constituted his criticism of comments by critic J. Hopman in *Uitzicht* magazine under the title *Toekomst van de beeldende kunsten in Indonesia*, published during the Dutch occupation period in 1947. In his criticism Hopman commented on exhibitions in the same year by former Persagi members in Jakarta. The following is taken from those comments:

Those paintings had no eastern characteristics. The painting methods appeared to follow those of the modern art of the West. The lack of eastern characteristics in the works amazed us. If there had been no Kokoschka, Klee, Munch, Chagall, Utrillo and others, there would surely not have been any Indonesians in Java painting in the manner observed in those two exhibitions.

Of course J. Hopman's statements could be seen as just commentary for commentary's sake. He should have understood that if there had been no reproductions of Japanese prints in Europe, where Vincent van Gogh was able to see them, that painter's influence with his expressionism would not have been as great or expansive as it is. This was also true of other painters like Paul Gauguin who went to Tahiti, Delacroix who went to Morocco and Picasso who observed African masks, as well as Henri Matisse who found inspiration in Persian rugs.

Persagi, with S. Sudjojono, who liked to talk and write, expanded the world of fine arts in Indonesia through the analysis of the importance of the character of a painter. Sudjojono once said:

Every person has his own character. One person's way of walking will be different from that of another. The voice of this one, will be different from the voice of that one. And

"Copy" dikualifikasikannya kedudukan tukang nyonto itu:

Dia akan jatuh seumur hidupnya, dan payah akan timbul pula kalau mereka ketahuan mencuri. Mereka sendiri payah hendak mengembangkan kecakapannya mereka sendiri. Kecakapan di sini tidak dalam arti teknis saja, tetapi juga dalam arti nampak aku mereka di tiap coretan kuasnya.

Masih dikutipkan pikiran-pikiran kesenilukisannya karena Sudjojono memang merupakan eksponen Persagi yang punya pengaruh meluas dan mendalam:

Pelukis Bangsa Indonesia ! Kalau ada lagi pada dadamu sedikit dari darahmu yang membawa benih angan-angan dari Dewi Kesenianmu itu, mari tinggalkanlah dogma kamu ala turisme itu. Putuskanlah rantai yang mengganggu kemerdekaan darahmu tadi untuk memberi tempat memelihara benih tadi menjadi garuda yang besar dan bersayap kuat bisa membawa kamu ke langit yang biru melayang-layang melihat dan menghisap kebagusan dunia, bulan, bintang-bintang dan matahari, alam ciptaan Tuhan. ⁹⁾

Kembali ke kegiatan Persagi sebelum perang Dunia Ke II, ternyata Persagi sudah menyelenggarakan pameran ke 1 sekitar tahun 1938 di toko buku Kolf, Jakarta. Biasanya para pelukis suka menyelenggarakan pameran di gedung Kunstkring. Tetapi oleh pengurus Yayasan lewat Sekretariat J. De Loos Haaxman, permintaan Persagi untuk berpameran di gedung itu ditolak karena prasangka bahwa bangsa Indonesia hanya cocok untuk menjadi petani. Itulah sebabnya tidak ada keinginan untuk melihat lebih dahulu karya-karya Persagi.

Menurut keterangan, pameran I di Kolf tersebut di atas menjejatkan pelukis Belanda antara lain H. van Velthuysen. Ia membuat ulasan di media Java Bode dan mengakui adanya tokoh seperti S. Sudjojono, Agus Djaja dan Surono. Melihat gelagat itu Kunstkring menjadi terbuka untuk Persagi yang oleh karena itu tidak disia-siakan kesempatan berikut. Pameran ke 2 Persagi akhirnya diselenggarakan di Kunstkring pada pameran berikut masih di tahun 1938 akhir.

BEBERAPA PEWARIS PERSAGI

Selain tokoh-tokohnya seperti Agus Djaja, S. Sudjojono, Suromo, Surono dan Abdulsalam, muncul generasi sambungannya yang lebih muda. Di zaman Persagi tokoh berikut memang kurang langsung merasai pembinaan Persagi karena usia muda. Namun mulai zaman Jepang, di mana aspirasi Persagi tetap hidup karena wibawa S. Sudjojono dan Agus Djaja yang memberikan tuntunan melukis di zaman Jepang, dapat disebut beberapa' antara lain: Otto Djaja, Kusnadi, Kartono Yudokusumo, Baharuddin, Harjadi S, Njoman Ngendon. Sanggar-sanggar pelukis yang mulai muncul

the colors liked by A, will differ from those liked by B. In short, their style will be different. ⁸⁾

In Article I from his book *Seni Loekis Indoensia Sekarang dan Yang Akan Datang (Indonesian Fine Arts Now and in the Future)* S. Sudjojono wrote:

Every artist must first have the character of an artist. And an artist must have courage in all things, particularly in the presentation of ideas to the world, although they may not be accpeted well, by any public.

In relationship to the glory of Indonesia's age-old cultures, he forbade the young artists to copy ancient art in a conventional manner without creativity because this high art was the result of daily life. Quality art was produced from the life of the artist and was related to daily routine. It was created and brought forth without recalling morals or traditions. The artist did not think of this or that, he was only driven by a force from within. In Article VIII the term "copy" was qualified with the definition of a copyist:

They will fall (into disgrace) for the rest of their lives and will not be able to regain status if it is found out they have stolen. They (copyists) are in difficulty when they attempt to develop their capabilities. Capabilities here refers not only to technical matters, but to the 'appearance of the self of the individual in every stroke of the brush.

Because Sudjojono was a widely influential exponent of Persagi another quote from his thoughts on painting seems appropriate: Painters of Indonesia! If there is still the blood of an artist flowing in your hearts which carries the inspiration of the goddess of art to you, then leave behind that touristic dogma of yours. Break the chains that hinder the freedom in your blood in order to provide a place for the nuture of those germs of inspiration so they will grow into immense garudas (mythical birds) with strong wings that can carry your people into the blue sky to see and breathe deeply of the greatness of the world, the moon, the stars and the sun, all of God's creation. ⁹⁾

If we take a look at the activities of Persagi before World War II, we will find that the group held its first exhibition around 1938 in the Kolf book shop in Jakarta. Painters usually held exhibitions in the Kunstkring building. But the director of the foundation through his secretary J. De Loos Haaxman, rejected Persagi's request to exhibit there because of the prejudiced idea that it was only appropriate for Indonesians to become farmers. This was the reason he had no desire to take a further step and look at the works of the Persagi members before rejecting them.

According to reports the exhibition at the Kolf book shop came as a surprise to Dutch painters, among them H. van Velthuysen. He wrote a review in the Java Bode and recognized the existence of figures like S. Sudjojono, Agus Djaja and Surono.

Observing this trend the Kunstring opened its doors to Persagi and the group had no further trouble showing there.

Anggota PERSAGI
Berdiri Kiri - kanan :
Tubagus Ateng Susyan,
S. Sudjojono, Rameli,
Damsyik, Agus Djaja
(Ketua PERSAGI), S. Tutar,
Sudiarjo, ...tidak dikenal,
Sindusisworo, Saptarita
Latif, isteri Sudiarjo.
Jongkok kiri - kanan :
S. Parman, Herbert
Hutagalung.

PERSAGI Members
Standing from left to right :
Tubagus Ateng Susyan,
S. Sudjojono, Rameli,
Damsyik, Agus Djaja
(PERSAGI Chairman),
S. Tutar, Sudiarjo, ...anon,
Sindusisworo, Saptarita
Latif, isteri Sudiarjo.
Squatting, from left to right:
S. Parman, Herbert
Hutagalung.



di awal Republik (tahun 1945-1950 an), tetap meneruskan aspirasi yang pernah dikobar-kobarkan sesuai dengan karangan dan kutipan di muka. Umpama Seniman Masyarakat, Pelukis Rakyat, Seniman Indonesia Muda dan Sanggar Bambu untuk menyebut beberapa saja. Aspirasi yang selalu didengungkan S. Sudjojono ialah: Jangan menjiplak dan menjadi duplikat pelukis lain. Karya lukis seniman yang jujur, maka karya-karya seni rupanya ibarat "cap jempolnya" maling yang ketinggalan di pintu. Corak lukis setiap karya seniman tertentu, akan berbeda dengan lain. Motto S. Sudjojono lain yang diikuti ialah bahwa : Lukisan ibarat jiwo ketok. Jiwo ketok ialah bahasa Jawa yang artinya, jiwa manusia yang manifest di atas kanvas. Dus kelihatan.

Usia Persagi memang pendek saja. Lahir 23 Oktober 1938 di salah satu sekolah dasar Jakarta di Gang Kaji; dan bubar karena dipaksa Jepang tahun 1942. Kemudian muncul Bagian Senirupa pada gerakan POETERA (Poesat Tenaga Rakyat) yang dipimpin empat serangkai: Soekarno, Hatta, Mas Mansjur dan Dewantara. Yang lain muncul dengan nama Jepang ialah Keimin Bunka Sidhosho. Tetapi pengajar seni rupanya, tetap tokoh Persagi umpamanya Agus Djaja dan S. Sudjojono. Ditambah Basuki Abdullah yang pernah belajar di akademi Negeri Belanda. Tidak mengherankan aspirasi dalam dunia seni rupa Indonesia tetap bergaung sampai

Persagi's second exhibition was held at the Kunstkring building at the end of 1938.

SEVERAL INHERITORS OF PERSAGI

Besides figures like Agus Djaja, S. Sudjojono, Suromo, Surono and Abdulsalam, a younger generation of artists came under the influence of Persagi. During the Persagi period the younger artists did not feel the immediate impact of the group because of their tender ages. However, during the Japanese occupation in which the aspirations of Persagi continued to thrive due to the influence of S. Sudjojono and Agus Djaja who taught painting, the following figures came forward: Otto Djaja, Kusnadi, Kartono Yudokusumo, Baharuddin, Haryadi S. and Nyoman Ngendon. Then later, during the beginnings of the Republic of Indonesia (1945-1950s), several painting studios appeared, which adhered to and carried on the aspirations, concepts and principles mentioned above. Among these studios were Seniman Masyarakat, Pelukis Rakyat, Seniman Indonesia Muda and Sanggar Bambu. The aspirations always put forth by S. Sudjojono were: Do not copy and become a duplicate of another artist. A real painting is the art of an honest artist, while the work of a dishonest artist is like the "thumb print" left behind by a thief at the door of a house. The style of each artist will vary from that of another.

Another of S. Sudjojono's mottos was: A painting

sekarang meskipun tidak sangat dominan lagi. Terutama pikiran untuk mendapatkan corak nasional. Dalam dunia seni kontemporer Indonesia tidak diikuti lagi.

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- 4). Taman Siswa Tigapuluh Tahun, Penerbit Taman Siswa, Yogyakarta 1969, hal. 69.
- 5). Suromo, "Timbul tenggelamnya Seni Lukis Indonesia, majalah Mimbar Indonesia, 1949 th. III.
- 6). Brochure Kementrian Penerangan Republik Indonesia, tanpa tahun. Dan juga wawancara dengan Abdulsalam, Yogyakarta.
- 7). ibid.
- 8). S. Sudjojono, Seni Loekis, Kesenian dan Seniman Penerbitan Indonesia Sekarang, Yogyakarta.
- 9). Ibid Hal. 9.

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WAWANCARA DENGAN :

1. Abdulsalam
2. Rameli
3. Baharuddin Marasutan
4. Fadjar Sidik
5. Nashar
6. Affandi
7. Agus Djaja

symbolizes the jiwo ketok. And jiwo ketok is Javanese for the human spirit which is manifested on canvas so that it becomes visible.

Persagi's lifespan was indeed a short one. It was born on October 23, 1938 in an elementary school in Gang Keji in Jakarta, and was forcefully disbanded by the Japanese in 1942. The Fine Art Section-of the Pusat Tenaga Rakyat (Putera) movement, which was led by Sukarno, Hatta, Mas Mansyur and Dewantara, was then established. Other organizations with Japanese names, like Keimin Bunka Sidhoshō, also appeared. But their art teachers were Persagi figures Agus Djaja and S. Sudjojono. Basoeki Abdullah, who had his academic art background in Holland, also taught. With the Persagi figures remaining in the fore of Indonesia's fine art sector it is no wonder that their aspirations continued to have influence. This is true even up to now, though certainly not as dominantly. In particular Persagi's goal of finding a "national style" continued to have impact. In the world of contemporary art, however, this is no longer a major issue.

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1. Abdulsalam.
2. Rameli.
3. Baharuddin Marasutan.
4. Fadjar Sidik.
5. Nashar.
6. Affandi.
7. Agus Djaja