

## THE GLOBAL PHENOMENON OF LOCAL INTEREST

The Paradigm of Modern Art with a Zest Touch of Traditional Art are to Figure It Out Our Truly the Indonesia Culture Identity.

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*Javanese traditional classic art created a magnificence artwork which is not coincidence to be created, but it had a certain purposes. Let us take a look to Borobudur temple and Batik as traditional classic art work, both of them created with certain purposes. At that time, the Javanese have been created their artwork through long process and it related with the power of dialectic culture system.*

*The dialectic of culture is can not live alone without any suspension from the pro and contra of power culture system. This means, a system is possible to be created in "conditional art" moreover it might appear to society as disagreement action to the power culture system.*

*Hopefully, the Indonesian artists could change their identity as the art worker into a real artist who able to designing their artwork by them selves. They also have to explore their wide-open perception and imaging the real Indonesia art culture. It means, if they want to be more global, they have to recognizing their real culture than adapting the western theories only. But, if they could not do that way, no wonder, they might possibly plug as the germ of modern artist or the germ of contemporary artist. Because to forwarding the global space, first, they should be able recognizing their truly identity as the real Indonesian native.*

Javanese traditional classic art reached their "a magnificence creation" after it had dialectic process in the Javanese culture system. And it reached their glory phase in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The system of absolute monarchy power was influenced their art "magnificence" culture. And it did not happen coincidentally, but it was an art creation and has certain purposes. It was oriented on the language, music, dance,

behavior, and diplomacy communication. All of those parts emerged into a "magnificence" art culture under the authority of the absolute monarchy system.

What about the jazz and blues music from America, do you think they were born in the south region of United States –in the dirty and poor Afro-America community- appears by them selves? In the contrary, these Jazz and Blues music were born as the White discriminated the Afro-America position. Then that discrimination leads the Afro-American people creating the "Black Music" as the dialectic form of their culture.

The dialectic of culture is can not live without any suspension of the pro and contra power culture system. This means, a system is possible to be created in "conditional" art moreover it might appear to society as disagreement action to the power culture system. Meanwhile taking good care of traditional art culture even the progressive contemporary art are having no progress and they are living in the dead-end dialectic system.

### The Art Identity

In a meantime, people call the art face of Javanese art as the "tradition classic art". And it formed by the dialectic of culture system. The Javanese music and dance are formed by the *monarchy-absolute* system which has another dialectics system inside of it. In the other hand,

our "folklore" art tradition were base on the old dialectic of culture which influence to the economic and the agrarian system, automatically, it formed as the tradition in our social system. Right now, those two art traditions are in the insecure position. Those because, after our country declare the Independence Day and succeed formed a nation state; we are only focus to motivating our nation as modern country only. We had through many government systems; but we have to still keep our motivation to create our modernity perception in the idiomatic way. It means, we will motivate to keep the new dialectic of culture systems which able giving brand new chances in our cultural systems. This a new dialectic of culture will reach up a new synthetic culture from the modernity (Kayam 1996).

In the other side, even they are trying to survive from dying circumstances; our young contemporary art has common condition with the traditional art, still. For them who did not want to be part of that dialectic of culture system, they will alive as a solitaire and point out their self identity. But in the reality, they are moving slow and hang on the maesens, sponsorship, and another funding from the cultural centers organization. If they did not want to be calling as premature child, both our contemporary and traditional art should take more time to accustom with the world. This means, our contemporary and traditional art are in the "conditional art" which offering any

kind of commodities product, even they use conditional name like mission, delegation, festival and etc. And the galleries who become the space to appreciate the art; today they are only selling the art work as commodities and possibly play collusions. That fact is the face in our dialectic of power culture.

The diversity of our folklore art –as the real assets for our country- is being extinct by the development of global information and technology. Somehow, the increase of human resources is only point out on local culture asset, and it can not be denied that they will take the folklore art as alternative commodities. The folklore art as culture identity, local culture asset, tourism asset are the country income and then they will take folklore art as a prospect to art commodities on the popular art. This condition will threat on the existence and folklore art essential which live longer in our society. The bound of marginal social-culture will hit by cultural improvement in any reasons. The art is paid by their community as the culture improvement. The bold bounding of social-culture norm on folklore art –as the high culture- wills extinct by the mass culture who offering the fake dreams (see the past and present Balinese folklore art), but those was the real issues which can cot be denied.

### **The Communication and Information Era**

We have one thing to be prepared in this decade is the global management. By facing

the global management in art world, we can not only hoping on western conception, but moreover, we have able to offering many kind of alternative conception which diverse from the ethnic traditional conception but adding it with modern touch (or in the contrary).

Reflecting on monetary crisis on 1997, it was the fact that our local power (ethnic tradition) is able to compete in global market. For example, handicraft art product was inferior by the modern art, but they able to answer that conception, because the handicraft is coming from the traditional art and adding it with the modern touch.

Why Iwan Tirta succeed on global market? This is because he tries to combine his clothing design in the modern concept but still adding it with traditional touch. Kain Ikat from Surakarta which turn into beach Sarong is fulfill the Jogja and Bali market, then continue to Japan, Europe and Canada market. Also it happened to Bandung, Pekalongan, Jogjakarta and Surakarta garment which able to export their product to Netherland, America and Japan. And then furniture products from Jepara, Serenan Klaten Mid Java are able to export their product too to Canada, Switzerland, Netherlands, and other Europe countries. All of those export products were the handicraft and furniture product which able to support our social economic problem in the monetary crisis.

In the twenty-first century, we are facing many kind of problem: social, culture, politic, economic, and other kind of morality problems. Then it was itching some of young artist communities who are trying to give a lesson in many performances, installation, collaboration art, and media which consist of conceptual artists. They are speaking about politic, social, economic, morality as the phenomenon into multiple-medias, multiple-ideas, and multiple-alternations. They are not limiting the art discipline or the blocked-art by modern art conception, but they are sensing it from the reality of diversity perceptions. That is why their art works talk about the social live nuances which focus on the universal ideas. Because, they are want to release their identity away from the individual limitation by time and space. Somehow, the modern artists express their individual expression; expressing their aesthetic experiences into "essential reality symbols", then the art paradigm in today's contemporary art will able to offering many ideas of "meaningful issues".

### **A Study of Traditional Art**

Understanding traditional art as a study in order to recognizing the national identity is considering on meaning, norm and symbol which concerned by their community support. Then it will become the reference to society live through the symbol system which is giving the meaning on the transmitted model to symbolic codes. The traditional art explanation

above is giving the connotation symbol that art is the expression of society culture through the human idea and behavior in their community. The art artifact which born in our country (esp. Java) is the expression of their society culture along all the philosophy backgrounds. This study of this phenomenon will try to understanding the nation aesthetic (Javanese aesthetic) as the platform to study the traditional classic art—concerned did not have “*paugeran*” (the believed paradigm) on the traditional artworks.

The nation aesthetic (Javanese aesthetic) as a platform to understanding the classic traditional art is a deep spiritual life. This spiritual life could be reach if we try to search the first platform on everything, a deep thinking about what is behind all the physical appear and searching the essential meaning inside of it which is about: “The human life supposed to be, the beginning and the ending of life (*sangkan paraning dumadi*), the relationship between human and mother nature and the relationship between human and God.” All the words and solutions from all those questions and searches are the philosophies which become the platform of human behavior and creation.

The Eastern philosophy in the Javanese context could understand as a searching with the deep and essential personal power in any shapes (phenomenon). All the efforts are to visualizing the life and the reality, human and their final

destination, the physical and spiritual relationship, the mortal and immortal, human and the universe. Those statements are known in the Javanese philosophy. It is also influence to their magnificence art works, like the Yasadipura literature works; he created a deep meditative philosophy’.

The philosophy thought of the story “*Bimo Ruci*” is the literature work into “*tembang macapat*” poetry. The aesthetic sense by Yadipura is point out on the combination between the literature aesthetic with the goodness norm. This lesson is describing how the human being searching their true life. The human reach their highest personality is divided in seven phases of life and the highest phase is called *Alam Niskala* (see the concept of *Tri-loka / Tri-buana*). The nation society (esp. Javanese) realize that their life in this world is contemporary and they have to understand what is the real life is (the eternal life). That is why, along their life in the world, they need preparation to face the true life and they have to pure their heart and soul first.

Another philosophy thought is *Arjunawiwaha*<sup>2</sup>. It is the literature work of the episode India Mahabharata epos. This epos is retelling Arjuna who doing his asceticism in Indrakila Mountain—one of the Himalayas top<sup>3</sup>. At that time, the Gods in the Sky Temple is threaten by the aggression of the giant king, *Niwatakawaca*. The Gods ask Batara Indra to find the powerfull human who able to beat

Niwatakawaca. And they choose Arjuna who in his asceticism.

The metaphysic meditation is talking about "being" in the personified of Dewa Siwa as the "sarining paramatatwa": the main highest truth, "hana tanhana": being exist or not exist, "sang sangkanparaning sarat": the where from end where to, origin and destiny of the universe, "sakala niskalata": the form of heart and soul. The relationship between Siwa and human is explained on "wahya dhyatmika sembahaning hulun": the exoteric and esoteric relation.

The thought of ethics is described on the dialog between Arjuna and Batara Indra. The ethics is not the theoretical reflection, but good behavior to reach the highest perfection "dharma ksatria": the knight duty. If the duty is well done "makaputusa sang hyang kalepasan", they will reach their liberation either.

That is why all those philosophy thoughts different from the western philosophy which fragmental and ambiguity. The Eastern philosopher said that "The philosophy is not created for them self. The knowledge is the key to reach the liberation which the only way for human to reach their true final destination".

Across to the Western thought, we find the contradiction among philosophy and believe to God. Meanwhile, the highest behavior in the Javanese philosophy is the believing in God, that God is the Absolute one. When the

Western philosophy is often asking the logic life, then our nation philosophy is often asking the life journey to reach the highest perfection. Somehow we use Javanese language, the philosophy of: "ngudi kasampunan" is trying to reach the highest perfection. In the contrary, if the Greece philosophy translated in Javanese, it will be "ngudi kawicaksanan" or to reach the cleverness.

Those two contrary philosophies are giving the lesson that the nation aesthetics (esp. Javanese) are implemented through the symbol of language which is come out from searching the life through the nature. No wonder, the traditional society searches their spiritual life to God by learning their nature life. In the end, it will form the relationship between their personal ego (microcosmic) with the universe and the environment (macrocosmic) and the relationship between their personal egos with the God.

Bagus Gede Yudha Triguna (1997:65) is explaining the epistemology of norm and symbol. In the epistemology, the word "symbol" is come from the Greece language *sumballo* (*sumballien*) which has meaning of interview, thinking, compare and unity. The Symbol consists of two things which united and based on their dimension. The ethics norm is priceless, but symbol have certain purposes to their community identity. A symbol is describing the multiple function of transcendental-vertical (the connection

between the reference, size, and the society behavior pattern, horizontal immanent (the media to communication concept and the baits the solidarity society supporter)<sup>4</sup>.

The Javanese perception, comprehension, and behavior are oriented on the mother culture. "The Javanese culture process is accelerate with the society movement which refer to mother culture concept "*sangkan paraning dumadi*" (see Geertz 1981:X-XII). The human birth symbolizing the relationship between God and human being, that they have a living and life, which all those things have the correlation with being exist or not exist. Geertz connect those relations in the *Javanese Believe* "*sangkan paraning dumadi*" which have main purpose to reach the liberation. That concept is known in the Javanese as *nunggak semi*<sup>5</sup>.

The microcosmic, macrocosmic and meta cosmic are relate to the Tribuana and Triloka concepts of Abdullah Ciptoprawiro in *Arjunawiwaha* (in the twenty first century) by Kanwa in the Erlangga Emperor era are the form of *Kakawin*. It is poetry and it performs on the Wayang performance. The metaphysics philosophy thought is "being" and blend into "personified". Dewa Siwa is described as the "*sarining paramatatwa*" (The main of the highest truth = *niskala*), being exist – not exist (*sakala-niskalatmaka*) which is the where from and where to, origin and destiny of the universe (*sakala*) (2000:34-35).

The Javanese philosophy is explaining the correlation between micro-macro-meta cosmic refer to Indonesian mystical thought of culture system. The macrocosmic thought is placing human as the part of the universe. The human should realize their position in front of the universe. And the micro-meta-macrocosmic thought in the Tribuana and Triloka concepts are: (1) *alam niskala* (the invisible and insensible spaces), (2) *alam sakala niskala* (the sensible and insensible spaces), and (3) *alam sakala* ( the world space). The human is able to fulfill those three meta cosmic spaces through *sakala niskala*: through the Shaman or Pawang (Cenayang) and art<sup>7</sup>.

Jose and Miriam Arguelles in their society perception with the microcosmic and the microcosmic are relate the ritual form into Mandala concept. It is talk about an interaction concept in the one unity and centering cosmic formation<sup>8</sup> (1972:85).

### **The Paradigm of Modern and Traditional Art Fusion**

The paradigm of modern art with a zest touch of traditional art is to figure it out our truly Indonesia culture identity. It can not be denied that our art knowledge is referring to western art, because our educational art systems are refer to western system. All those knowledge conception did not have to refused, but take it as the one set knowledge concept to learn for, especially to comparing with our culture. It

means, both diverse conceptions should synergizing and upgrade our knowledge to face the globalization era. To face the globalization, we have to combining the modern and traditional art.

And we have to increase our paradigm of modern art knowledge. It means, we have to improve the modern art concept (recently become the alternative subject in the university) as the key to learn and understanding the traditional art. In the end, we hope the Indonesian designer and artists could minimize their identity as the ordinary art worker into a real artist who able to designing their artwork by them selves. They also have to explore their wide-open perception and reflecting the real Indonesia art culture. It means, if they want to be more global, they have to recognizing their real culture than adapting the western theories only. But, if they could not do that way, no wonder, they will plug as the germ of modern artist or the germ of contemporary artist. Because if they want to forwarding the global area, they should be able recognizing their truly identity as the Indonesian people. It is also fit to our new educational art system in the Indonesia University. It improves the plurality of traditional culture potentials as the key to compete with the global market. So, if we want thinking more global, we have thinking more traditional too.

*Let us draft the past and build the future*

The famous Bima searching "Perwitasari" (the water of life) the holy water in order to find the true power could be symbolizing how hard the Javanese people finding their life meaning (Yasadipura I, 1729-1801). The philosophy meditation of Dewa Ruci is the "Mystical Philosophy" (*Filsafat Mistika*). And it did not come from rational state but through "inner experience" (*penghayatan batin*) and "meditation" (*samadi*). In the altered or mediative state of consciousness human get their experimental knowledge. That knowledge is written in the story of Bima Journey who searching the water of life. He climbs the mountain, dive to the ocean and meet the Dewa Ruci, then he blend into Dewa Ruci body and finally find the ivory puppet. These all are describing about, Ego Conscious, The Conscious, The Self and absorb the knowledge through the essentiality of life look like the ivory puppet. It reflecting in transcendental and transcendental process of ego or the fifth sense into self consciousness and reach the cosmic consciousness. All these process is become experimental knowledge which explain in the conceptual knowledge of antropology and mystical epistemology.

Arjunawiwaha is the episode of India Mahabarata epos which Arjuna is doing his asceticism in Indrakila Mountain—one of Himalaya's top. He meditate to find the power and gun, because he want to win the Bharata Yuda war. At that time, the Gods above the sky is threaten by the aggression of the giant king, *Niwatakawaca*. The Gods ask Batara Indra to find the powerful human and beat *Niwatakawaca*. And they choose Arjuna who in his asceticism. Batara Indra will pumping Arjuna's dignity and purpose. From the sky temple, Batara Indra send the goddess under the leader of Dewi Supraba. These goddes have a mission to seduce Arjuna and postpone his asceticism, but they are fail to seduce him. Then Batara Indra by himself down to earth, he disguise as a Brahmana and ask what is Arjuna's asceticism motive. The dialog is expressing the philosophy thought in etism norm. Batara Indra see Arjuna with his archery and sword gun. Then he ask Arjuna, is that necessary if someone who in his liberation asceticism bring his guns, properly? Arjuna replied that his asceticism motivation

is not for liberation but to fulfill the duty as the knight who search his power, and the gun itself is for war as the duty to protect the people. After Batara Indra hear Arjuna explanation, then he is happy. And the last test is done by Batara Siwa who disguise as the hunter. At the moment, Niwatakawaca send the angry giant who become the wild pig and broke the Indrakila asceticism place. Along Arjuna come out from his place and fire his archery to that fake pig, Batara Siwa is fire his archery too. Then the argue is happen, but Arjuna already know who is he talk to and he kneel in front of Batara Siwa. In that dialog, we can find the philosophy thought about the begining and ending of human life, the universe and Siwa Metaphysic. After all, Arjuna's asceticism is accepted by Gods. Batara Siwa give his Pasopati gun the powerfull archery, which use by Arjuna to kill Niwatakawaca. As the present of his winning, Arjuna is married with Dewi Supraba and contemporary he become the King of the Sky Temple. (Arjunawihaha *The Nuptial of Arjuna*). Dr. R. Ng. Poerbatjaraka (Lesya) : *Arjunawihaha, Tekst en Vertaling*. Martinus Nijhoff, 'S Gravenhage, 1926)

<sup>1</sup> Karya: Arjunawihaha ( *The Nuptial of Arjuna*). Dr. R. Ng. Poerbatjaraka (Lesya) : *Arjunawihaha, Tekst en Vertaling*. Martinus Nijhoff, 'S Gravenhage, 1926

<sup>2</sup> Ida Bagus Gede Yudha Triguna, 1997. *"Mobilitas Kelas, Konflik dan Penafsiran Kembali Simbolisme Masyarakat Bali, Desertasi Doktor*, Bandung: PPs Universitas Padjadjaran

<sup>3</sup> Agama Jawa (*Javanese Believe*) as the spirit (Cliford 1981) is adding by Harsja Bachtiar refer to Javanese people research in Suriname (1976), that Javanese Religion is not pray to the spirit, but base on the main purpose of the beginning and the ending of life (*sangkan paraning dumadi*). The important thing, both Cliford and Bachtiar are able give the information about the religion system in the Javanese social life among the social structure, organization and symbol system (1981: X-XII).

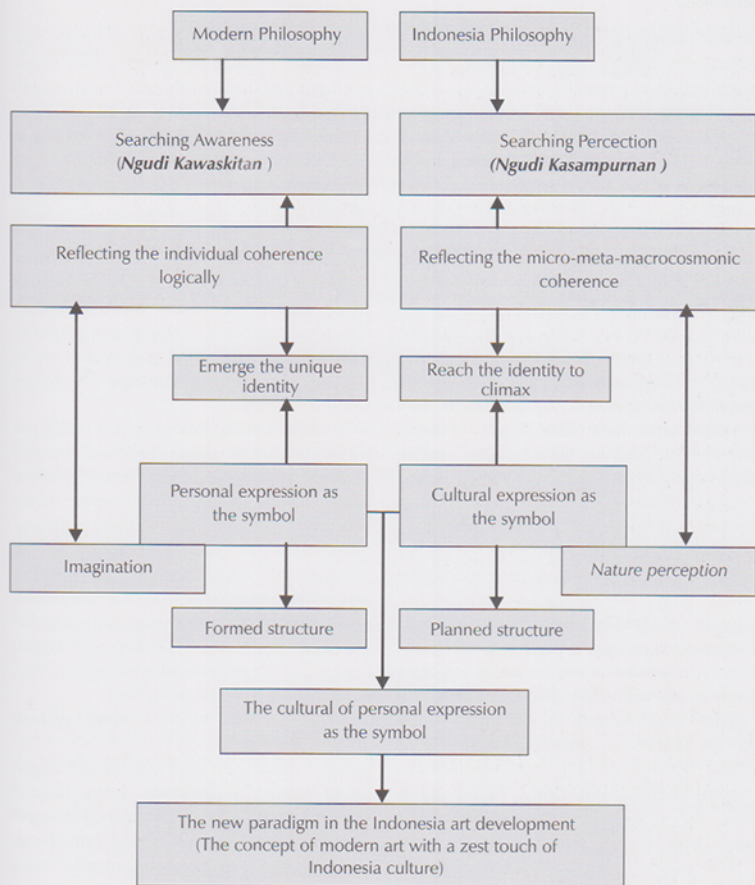
<sup>4</sup> Nunggak semi: *nunggak*= come from word *tunggak*. It is the rest of the tree with the root inside the ground.

*Semi* is the growth seed or a growth from their mother culture. A growth process of the culture behavior in the certain phase is referring to their mother culture (*babon*). Neka the tree is the outcome of the growth culture process which refers to the culture essentialism. (Harjonegoro, 15<sup>th</sup> June 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Dharsono Sony Kartika (ed)(2004), *Pengantar Estetika*, Bandung: Rekayasa Sain P;202-203

<sup>6</sup> *Closely related of the function of purifying the mind and body is centering. It is concentration-making concentric of the organism's out-flowing energies by turning them inward and focusing them through a central point. In this way the biopsychic energies are literally recycled. Any activity which achieves this effect is from of centering* (Yose and Mariam Arguelles, 1972:85). The "Mandala" concept form the balance, clarity and unity in centering life of each the energy.





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