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Character Education for Integrity and Justice toward Sustainable Future

**Editors:
Widyastuti Purbani
Satoto E. Nayono**

**Proceeding of the 1st International
Conference on Character Education**

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EXPLORING ATTITUDINAL POLICY IN ARTS A CASE STUDY: CERAMIC MAKING

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ABSTRACT

Humans are born with some divine endowment. Gradually, human natures are managed in such a way to overcome their life problems. They have different natural characteristics manifested in different tribes, ethnics, customs, religions, and believes. With their physical and mental power they manage their life dynamics. The earth consists of continents each of which has different climates, weathers, and atmospheres. Geographical factor plays an important role for humans to manage their life. Such a difference is manifested in different foods, physical appearances, hair colors, and languages. Even different levels of language of aesthetics exist. Indonesia extends from Sabang to Merauke and consists of thousands of islands, a lot of unique ethnics and tribes. They have traditionally inherited culture that includes agriculture, buildings, medicines, et cetera. The most monumental heritages are both classic and traditional arts. They both contain universal values. The traditionally inherited arts are full of spiritual quotient. The positive insights in traditional arts are intended to provide a kind of guideline for the following generations in order to give adequate thought after life. This has inspired the creation of concepts through policy and education. Our traditional arts deserve to be developed to represent our national self-identity. The forms of traditional arts represent social arrangement and control to ensure social comfort in the society. This is especially true for traditional artifacts containing functional values proceeded in politeness and dedication, in order that the created artifacts be beneficial, complete, healthy, and aesthetic. Especially in the making of ceramic artifacts such fundamental attitudes as appreciation to the material, natural environment, water, temperature, atmosphere, fire, work ethos, positive expectation, positive thought, health and the like are needed in order to have a complete, good, and useful forms of ceramic. Such characteristics are required since they will always be manifested in the produced ceramics, especially those value-containing functional ceramics. In order to have the desired result, such requirements have to be met and such attitudes have to be possessed. It is therefore necessary for art workers to have positive attitudes and behaviors.

Keywords: *human, culture, national heritage, ethnic, unique, art, tradition, politeness, deserve to be developed, self-identity.*

1. National Cultural Inheritance

Humans are born and endowed with some values by God to face up their life over time in accordance to their life age including moving, crying, thinking, obsessing, working, contemplating, and solving their life problems. To survive, humans do a lot of things. Humans have time to develop and improve their physical and mental capacity to cope with the existing obstacles, either physically and mentally. Both mental and physical aspects interfere each other in any activity and dynamics. Humans employ all they have to gradually develop culture in their life. Humans flow in line with the social community, furnishing and accompanying social life to establish dignified humans. With the physical and mental endowment, humans produce culture. Even in the highest level of activities such as congregated passing prayers to God, the body, hands, lips, tongue, and heart as well as

all other senses, are unified and blended in togetherness (Driyarkara: 1969). The blend of both physical and mental activities in humans are manifested in three representations: *patrape*, *ulate*, *pangucape* (the attitude, mimic, and words”).

On this earth there are a lot of types of humans that reside in nearly all parts of the continents in the earth. Continents are divided into islands each of which has different climates, weathers, atmospheres, and population styles in living their lives. Humans are divided into tribes each of which has different character of nationality, ethnicity, race, and religiosity. The earth is divided into continents each of which has different natural characteristic and natural circulation. The people have different characteristics of foods, physical appearances, hair, and language. Language itself is divided into different languages according to the ethnic and clan. Language level is also divided into different levels.

Indonesia extends from Sabang to Merauke, and is resided by various ethnics, tribes, customs, and clans. Some still reserve their traditions, some others have assimilated their culture because of marital relationship among ethnics and nations. Such all big islands as Sumatera, Madura, Java, Bali, Lombok, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and other small islands have different and unique culture. The uniqueness derives from the types of foods, traditional rites, arts, customs, and artifacts. The uniqueness of tradition and culture has indicated the possession of tradition inherited representing the supporting societies.

Presently, in the very modern era of communication, human relation is no longer limited because of the rapid innovation and invention of technology and science. In seconds humans in different continents can know each other. National and ethnical limits have been fading, and are moving towards global community. In a remote village of Sulawesi, local children are having lunch at McDonalds. In Wonosari, junior high school students are having birthday at McDonalds or Pizza Hut. In remote areas they can enjoy the same recipe and flavor because of the franchise trend. *Srabi* Solo (rice-flour pancake) has similar tastes in different places. Nothing is wrong, because of the rapid growth and practical requirement of the present world. Globalization is coming and we have to welcome it, either we like it or dislike it.

A phenomenon in that case is art. Traditional art (inherited from generation to generation) is a strategic need for society. Until now, some traditional arts stand strong. Art establishes human dignity and it represents the indicator of social culture, value production, life survival, social comfort, and social values commonly found in particular ethnics. Traditional art can strongly bind social ties. Indonesia with its many islands and ethnics is a good place for the development of both classic and traditional arts. Traditional values are very meaningful and functional. It contains mental, physical, social, and pedagogical functions.

Traditional art should be far from the contradiction of modern and traditional arts. It implies that tradition should be placed as an art supported and developed by traditional communities (through verbal tradition to express art expressions through sound, movement, discourse, words, and others). Meanwhile modern art is characterized by writing tradition and is further developed by electronic visuals supported by global capitalism that puts a strong relation between art and commodity. The most important goal is that the art has market value. The deconstruction is meant to return traditional art roots to the original place as the source of larger scope of art and to be developed when meeting contemporary or modern arts in new Indonesia.

The forms of art are closely related to social life. An art life is a form of social rule. As a social rule, art develops consistently because it is supported by a social group and thus its development represents the life of the supporting social groups. For example, in the past, one of the branch of art was supported by the royal family, and another was supported by such other social group as the common people. For artists, art is something the beauty of which can be felt through the form, color, idea, and feeling to create something that can satisfy the need and pleasure for those who listen and watch it. Such is the case of the forms of games.

2. Culture Involves All Aspects of Life

Human needs have developed into various types and have become complicated. As a cultural producers, the more humans know more about their larger surrounding of their life, the more dynamic their culture. We see that agricultural culture is closely related to the life of our

society because our ancestors are tough farmers. Until now highly-valued planting culture is still held by those who are willingly holding the planting and agricultural system just like their ancestors who employ the ancient climatic system in agriculture. In building houses, the ancient system did not use any metal nail. Instead they used wooden or bamboo nail to create earthquake-proof building. A very popular style of ancient house is *joglo*. In the past, our ancestors are famous for herbal medication system that employed herbs found in the gardens and yards. The system was effective and simple for family medication. However, the most monumental and popular outcome of culture is art. This art is highly appreciated by the nations all over the world.

Art is passed by our older generations. The art includes such audiovisual as *karawitan* (traditional music and singing accompanied by gamelan) to accompany the *sendratari* and traditional dance-drama, and such visual art as painting, statue, relief, carving, and puppet. Some visual arts use natural material. These include batik, leather puppet, metal relief, wood carving, ceramic, bamboo weaving, rattan, and leaves. This class of art has practical function useful for daily life.

There are a lot of visual art from Indonesia. When it has to be mapped, the number is almost uncountable. This includes religious buildings, war tools, clothes, furniture, functional domestic equipments, and still many others. Another inherited art is ornament commonly found in combination with artifact. In the ornament we can find meanings and values as the source of the creation of art. The values are manifested in the pattern that contain deep sense, that may be impossible to be verbalized in daily context. Therefore, ornament is a strategic medium to reproduce a cultural value and belief from the society and the person who makes it (in Gustami: 2008).

Ornament plays an important role in visual art. This can be seen in the application in different aspects of life, and includes all aspects of human life, both physically and mentally. For example, ornament is applied in residential buildings, religious buildings, royal palaces, home equipments, kitchen utensils, ceremonial facilities, hunting tools, transportation means, games facilities, souvenirs, and still many others. Other forms include media related to the manifestation of ornamental art. The use of ornamental art in some facilities of life implies the high esthetics of Indonesian people in art. This means that something beautiful can be expressed in ornamental art media. About visual art in Indonesia, the existence is very vital. When we trace back we can get a clear description about the makers. In visual art literature, we have known a form of visual art made of clay which is popularly called ceramic.

Ceramic contains the elements of material, technique, esthetics, function, style, production, and loyalty during the production. The making of ceramic is based on fundamental order that include appreciation to the material, appreciation to time (time identification and management), understanding of atmosphere, and knowledge about material characters. To create a good ceramic, an artist has to be physically, psychologically, and intentionally healthy.

3. Getting Involved in Art: A Dedicative Attitude

Getting involved in art process means to work, just like the workers who produce functional products or other services. What makes visual artists exclusive is the type of work and the emotion that they involve when they work. This emotional condition has resulted in egocentric character, which is sometimes excessive, for the visual artists. Actually, the fundamental aspects of artists are similar. What makes it different is the high understanding and sensitivity on the one hand, and the low self enlightenment of the artists. For example, in the past art maestros could create artworks that are persistent over time, universally adopted, and functionally beneficial. Personal values and all the accompanying aspects in the making of arts are different among works.

High valued arts are made by the artists who have high value in understanding life and lives. The future taste of great artists exceeds the common people because they successfully formulate all of their personal power. Their mental life runs faster and deeper than the physical body. The body follows and adjusts to wave of the mental, intuition, and spiritual life. All elements in them represent life. The outcome of great artists are long lasting over time. They are beneficial and useful for other people. In art, our ancestors have generated some arts that include puppet, batik, kris, temple, and others.

In the past, high valued traditional art were made by a group of community who lived in dedication as a servant *sak dremah nglampahi* (the way it is). This is a dedicative attitude held by

our ancestors. This attitude is a form of mental intelligence. They think beyond temporary world to the betterment of future life. They think of those whom they will leave, what they can pass for the next generation. They pass their everlasting thought to the next generation. The attitude is a form of serious dedication to the next generation, for the better world, human goodness, natural and environmental reservation, and for the reservation of great universe.

In the process of creation, the art having functional benefits for daily life (applied art) is required to be more dedicative. The creator has to be able to represent other people as the users. Therefore, the creator puts himself as the consumers that will use his products. He has to feel as if he is the user. Thus, he puts a lot of consideration and always gets involved in the use of the produced goods or the created artifacts.

4. Attitude of Ceramic Artists in Work

The work of applied visual artists is actually a dedication. They are commonly called craftsmen. In Indonesia there are a great number of craftsmen, spreading in industrial centers all over the nation. To mention some there are centers of furniture, ceramic, weaving, batik, woven products, and such ornamental arts as metal, hair, leather, and still many others. Such small-scale industrial centers can absorb foreign exchange. When economic crisis occurred in Indonesia, the industrial centers can survive, especially local-based material industry. Thorough unique craft products, Indonesia survive and appreciated by the world. It remains competitive through exported crafts because Indonesia has various ethnic tradition. Therefore, as a country that has many ethnic inheritance, it is normal that the government gives more attention to maintain the existence of the industry, in order that the people can reproduce the culture. The way may be in the form of education through relevant policy in this matter.

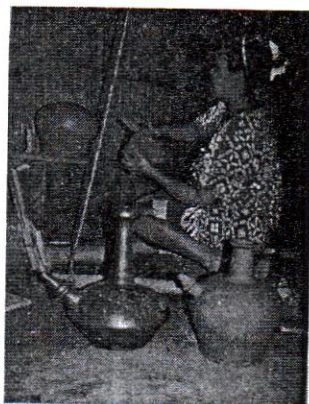
Ceramic industry in Indonesia is far behind the initial producers of ceramic (China). China and Greece are two producers of the most beautiful ceramic in the world, especially the ceramic made with rotating technique, and both countries produce high-esthetic ceramics (in *The Meaning of Art*: Herbert Read: 42). Unique and artistic ceramic can compete with other countries' products. Some years ago, teens of containers from Kasongan (center of ceramic in Yogyakarta) were exported to America, Europe, Australia, and other continents. The export value was large.

Indonesian ceramic is very unique. Yogyakarta with its Kasongan ceramic can meet the international trade agenda for small-scale industrial sector. Clay-based ceramic with specific burnt-brown color has ornamented some apartments and residences in foreign countries.

Why do our ceramic products can expands to foreign countries? One of the reasons is that it is processed in great perseverance and consistency as well as loyalty. In processing the ceramic the target of ceramic making is that the ceramic has to be functional and educational. It has to help people in performing their daily activities, it provides health. The making of ceramic is initiated by cleanliness and freedom of feeling and thought. To produce good ceramic, dedication and mental and physical adjustment are needed.

In the process of ceramic making actually the artists are very dedicated. All the five senses work collaboratively. Ceramic will not be created unless there is a good concentration in rotating the clay. Therefore, ceramic making has to be based on personal preparedness. Mind has to be free of any disturbance. The dedication forms the good basis for creating plastic clay ceramic. Some other considerations as atmosphere, fire heat, weather, water, air temperature, health, etc have to be made.

The making of clay-based material represents harmony and adjustment. We have to understand the natural environment. We have to be healthy, understand soil character, understand atmosphere during the drying, manage fire heat during the burning. We have to free our mind from negative thought when we form a particular shape. Honesty is represented in the technical tracks of the ceramic output. When the clay is wet, it is formed with full positive imagination and obsession to produce esthetic visual outcome. Commitment and adjustment of attitude and the five senses collaboratively form shapes. This is possible only when there is an adjustment of physical and mental treatment.



Picture.1. Woman Ceramic Maker From Bayat Village, Java (Foto by: Chitaru Kawasaki)



Picture. 2. To finishing the form of Ceramic, Singkawang Ceramic, from Singkawang, West Kalimantan (Foto by: Noor Sudyati. Singkawang ,Jan 2009.)



Picture. 3 To make "Naga" motif Ornamen, Singkawang Ceramic Product (Foto by: Noor Sudyati)

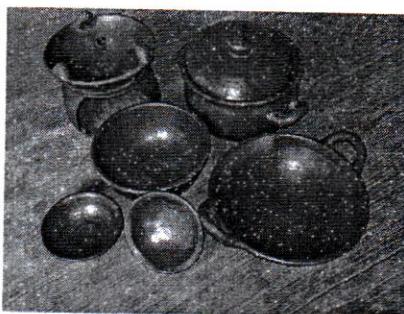


Picture.4. The Naga Motif be include the body with green colour glase, blue glase. (Foto by: Noor Sudyati.)

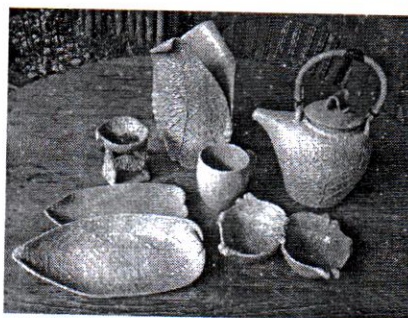
5. Producing Ceramic: Managing the Five Senses

A hundred-year-age ceramic pot inherited from the parents loyally accompanies the owner during his life. The pot has vital function as drinking-water container for all family members. This story is told by Ibu Kartila from a village in Singkawang West Kalimantan. The health of all family members is guaranteed and maintained while drinking the water contained in the pot. However, not many people know the process of the making of the pot hundreds of years ago. It was produced in strict concentration that lead the hand, mind, eyes, heart, and expectation are merged towards a complete and perfect pot. A work is always characterized by human touch. The pot is formed by rotating technique. The outcome is cylindrical and symmetrical ceramic. The rotating technique results in visual lines, implying the rich value of life.

In the rotating table the craftsmen put all energy to be distributed through the hands, to produce a form of pot that is complete, functional, and useful for other people. They then put some ornaments as the decoration, furnish it softly to keep it from breakage. Their esthetic touch represents expectations manifested in the ornaments. The next steps are drying and burning the pot. During the burning, they patiently wait the process. They consistently expect that the pot will be perfect. The produced pot represents the value tracks of the maker. This value is then transformed into functional values for the family.



Picture. 5. Ceramic for daily tool, made from Earthenware clay, made in Bayat
(Foto by: Noor Sudiwati, Nov, 2009.)



Picture.6. Contemporer ceramic leaf style made in 'Keramik Kreatif' desain By Noor Sudiwati.
(Foto by: Noor. S.)

Pot craftsmen are found all over the nation. Why are there always ceramic craftsmen in any region in the nation? Because the natural material is clay and clay is easily found anywhere in the world, although at different level of quality. The ceramic is made in full power. They work in full resource. They successfully unify the natural elements and the five senses in their work. Therefore, ceramic craftsmen have positive character. They are patient and adjustable.

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- '*Sak Dremah Anglampahi*' adalah konsep hidup orang Jawa yang artinya: Dalam hidup ini Sekedar Menjalankan, semua sudah ada yang mengaturnya (Tuhan).
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