

TRANSMISSION OF AESTHETIC ETHICAL VALUES OF LOCAL CULTURAL WISDOM OF THE BAJO COMMUNITY IN THE COASTAL AREA OF BOKORI ISLAND, KONawe REGENCY, SOUTHEAST SULAWESI PROVINCE

BY

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Article History

Received: 24/10/2023

Accepted: 31/10/2023

Published: 02/11/2023

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Abstract

The global discourse that Indonesia is seen by the world as a rich nation cannot be denied. The wealth that is owned is not only stored in natural laboratories, especially in mountainous areas, but is spread widely in coastal areas. We can feel this phenomenon in the frame of life of the Bajo people who have an aesthetic artistic and cultural heritage. However, changing times also seem to threaten changes in values. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a scientific study to provide academic arguments regarding aesthetic phenomena. One specific method used as an epistemic step to find answers to existing problems is 'aesthetic phenomenology'. Based on the findings and studies while in the field, it seems that there is a lack of disharmony between three important elements, namely (1) Kunstbeoefenaar; (2) Kunstacademisch; (3) Kunstbureaucraat. When this concept can operate in accordance with their respective styles, then what is called 'cultural preservation' will be transformed into 'cultural innovation' towards an empowered nation.

Keywords: Bajo Etnic, Conservation, Traditional Arts.

A. INTRODUCTION

The global discourse that Indonesia is seen by the world as a rich nation is undeniable. The wealth owned by the Indonesian people is not only stored in natural laboratories, especially in mountainous areas, but it is also widespread in coastal areas. We can feel this phenomenon in the frame of life of the Bajo people who have an aesthetic cultural artistic heritage. The art can be in the form of traditional performance art or fine art. However, changing times also seem to threaten changes in traditional values inherent in the form of works of art. Therefore, responding to this phenomenon is considered necessary for a scientific study to be able to find academic answers that are epistemically tested related to the phenomenon. One important issue that is a little intriguing is the phenomenon of the *behavioristic aesthetic* of today's young generation who tend to be apathetic towards the nation's cultural heritage. The manifestation of apathy here can be seen from the

loss of *the Arts Relay* or art relay so that the regeneration of traditional artists is interrupted.

This phenomenon seems to be also felt by local traditional artists in the Bajo tribal community. One of them is the younger generation who are able to play traditional musical instruments such as gambus and drum in every traditional ritual. On the basis of this phenomenon, an in-depth study was conducted to provide solutions to the pollution of existing cultural values, namely *Preservation of Traditional Arts Techniques* within the cultural frame of the Bajo tribe. This is very important because it is a form of local wisdom of the Bajo community. The term local wisdom is synonymous with *local genius*. A term first popularized by Wales (Wales, 1948:8).

The Bajo tribe is very good at adjusting to life in the waters of the archipelago. The number of Bajo people throughout Indonesia is estimated to be around 50,000 people. The Makassarese call them

by the name of the *Bayo* tribe or *To Rijenne*. The Bugis call it the Bajo tribe and people in Central Sulawesi call it *Bajau*. Around Malaysian waters it is called *Bajaw* (Zulyani Hidayah, 1996: 32-33). They have a sedentary lifestyle. But with legal certainty made by the government, they can already live on an island that is the destination of their lives like the Bajo community in Mekar.

Time changes that lead to more advanced era changes due to the development of technological science seem unable to guarantee the development of traditional arts of the local community, as happened in the scope of life of the Bajo community. In the past, we could meet the aesthetic phenomenon of beautiful girls and young people gallantly performing a traditional performance in a traditional room by playing drums or gambus in every traditional sacred event. In fact, the current news is that such aesthetic behavior has become blurred. That is the basic foundation for this study to be conducted. If referring to Boskof's view that a habit that occurs in a particular community is influenced by two things, namely *Internal and External Factors* (Boskof, 1964: 141). Boskof's concept of thought gives us a special message that in fact every change that occurs in a culture, be it changes that occur in terms of art or non-art can be suspected from both things.

Synthesis with the view of previous experts that, it is not easy for a nation to close itself from the presence of other nations because the distinctive nature of culture always undergoes transition and transformation. Alan R. Beals expressed his view that, when cultural contact or cultural contact first occurs with other cultures, it will gradually cause a change called the term *culture acculturation or the phenomenon of acculturation* (Beals, 1973: 303).

Art and art are two elements that cannot be separated in everyday life, because it depart from these two elements there are laws of cause and effect that are reaction action, and sometimes also the opposite is true, namely reaction and action. It should be realized that the two also cannot stand alone, apart from nature as a foothold. A little description of art by referring to the views of the world's leading philosopher Plato, states that art is something that is mimetic or in other words can be narrated more simply that art is an imitation of imitation (Taufik Abdullah, 1980: 8). This view certainly gives a straightforward meaning that actually art is nothing but the process of creation of the artist presenting a certain form of art into a certain medium sourced from a certain object. Art as one of the products of culture has an important role in the lives of people, including the Bajo tribe.

In relation to cultural matters, often the diction of 'culture' is defined as a result of human creation, taste, and work that is influenced by an important element called the term *karsa*. If 'creation' is connoted with the process of using thought and reason as the medium, 'rasa' is the ability to use the five senses and heart as a medium, while 'karsa' is the skill of hands, feet, and even the whole human body as a medium. 'Karsa' is like a commander or leader who determines when, how, and for what the three elements of culture are moved. If culture is described as above, then art is nothing but an element of beauty that comes from the taste that exists in humans. The sense of beauty can actually be touched

through a medium called the five senses. Some of them are the eyes which play an important role as a visual instrument, the ear which also plays an important role as a medium or instrument of hearing, the nose which plays an important role as smell, the tongue which acts as a taste bud and fingers as a touch (Soemardjan, 1980: 19). Based on this conception gives the idea that to find beauty, epistemically also has its way or order.

Each culture has its own cultural products, one of which is the art tradition that lives and develops within a certain scope by certain communities. Experts think that tradition in the frame of Nusantara culture actually gets its special position from certain ethnicities who have high cultural awareness. However, one thing that is also important to realize together is that to get a deep understanding of the topic being studied, we must be able to see the object of the problem in text and context. Art as a text and culture as context. The concept offered by Ahimsa that art as a scientific discipline can actually be seen in the point of view of art as a 'text' and 'context', just like art in the political, social, and economic context of tourism. Ahimsa, 2007: 18-29). This paradigm certainly adds more to our perspective in examining the nature of traditional art and its preservation in the context of Bajo culture.

In relation to traditional art, according to Edward's view, tradition is something that is passed on or something that is transmitted from the past to the present with a consideration that what is entrusted to be passed on or transmitted to the next generation is an exemplary matter, therefore the problem of traditional art must be well preserved (Edward, 1983: 12-13). Of course, this is the basis for why the study of traditional art needs to be considered because the nature of traditional art or art globally is always a process of transmission and transition so local artists are needed at certain times.

The Bajo tribe is one of the ethnic groups that inhabit the coastal areas of the mainland and islands of Southeast Sulawesi. From an economic-social perspective, the presence of the Bajo community in the social life of the community is very pronounced, this is because the Bajo community plays a very important role in terms of trade. This is especially important in meeting the needs of everyday people who are more related to sea and sea transportation. Demographically, the presence of the Bajo community in Mekar Village, Soropia District, South Konawe Regency from the 80s to the 90s, namely the reign of the Governor of Southeast Sulawesi, Mr. La Ode Kaimuddin, the Bajo community lived on a small island known as Bokori. The increase in population on Bokori island makes the government have to respond to this by making a policy so that the Bajo people who previously lived on Bokori island can inhabit the Konawe mainland area which is more promising for the needs of the Bajo people, especially the need for clean water. Historically, the existence of the Bajo tribe is more attached to marine life. They deal not only with the economic sector but also politics. Since the time of the Srivijaya Kingdom in the 7th-11th centuries, the Bajo people have taken an important role in the fleet sector. Bajo people as a global understanding, inhabit many coastal areas. It is not easy to separate the position of the Bajo people from the water area because the sea is everything to the Bajo people and everything is

in the sea. The essence of this writing is to provide an overview of the social conditions of the Bajo community related to the values of local wisdom they have in order to remain organized and maintained, especially traditional arts, and provide solutions related to the preservation of the problems at hand. The study is of course very important to be carried out because it is one of the pillars so that the nation's cultural and artistic heritage is maintained.



Figure 1. Social Living Conditions of the Bajo tribe (Source: Documentation Firmansyah, 2023)

One special method used as an epistemic step to find answers to all problems in the frame of Bajo social life is 'aesthetic phenomenology' which tries to portray the life of Bajo people based on empirical facts without ignoring the deepest things that hide behind all empirical phenomena as infinite consciousness. Of course, *the interdisciplinary paradigm* is also applied in order to obtain a holistic one. Experts view that the *interdisciplinary* approach implies the integration of several disciplines to achieve a more complete understanding (Ichimura, 1975: 112). Discourse on these methods and paradigms will be applied in looking at the cultural life and aesthetic behavior of the Bajo community, both noetic and *anoetic*.

B. DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of facts and data while in the field, there are several important issues that certainly require a special response to get out of the problem, including:

1. *Kunstbeoefenaar*

One important element in efforts to preserve traditional artistic values is the presence of *kunstbeoefenaar* itself as the main doorstep of the position of the community that owns the culture itself. The main step that can be taken is the *Natural Method* where art activists spontaneously spend free time on the sidelines of busyness to find their stomach needs to provide for themselves and their families also provide space to meet inner needs by playing traditional musical instruments such as gambus in a free space that is non-formal without having to present many audiences at a considerable cost. Since art is one's inner calling, the presence of others to be present in the same space in order to enjoy the same atmosphere is actually a life that is being entrusted by the True Artist to his chosen servants. When discovering this phenomenon, it is actually indirectly this kind of person who is implicitly given the mandate to continue the baton of artistry related to the existing traditional art values. It does not have to have a close genealogical

relationship to the artist presenting the particular performance. This first element is the internal genius of the cultural owner.

In relation to the study of the preservation or preservation of art as a product of culture, Edi Sedyawati believes that in order for Indonesian cultural products to remain sustainable, of course, special efforts are needed to ensure the sustainability of all these cultural products, one of which is traditional art (Sedyawati, 2006: 76). The conceptual paradigm expressed by Sedyawati implies to us that special efforts are needed to be carried out as evaluation material so that the agendas that have been launched previously have a common thread and are sustainable.



Figure 2. Meeting of Bajo Community Leaders with Academics (source: Documentation Firmansyah, 2023)

In relation to art as a cultural product, according to Paul B. Horton's view, the term culture is a system of values and norms or organized science as a guide to the life of its society (Horton, 1951: 58). Art as a product of a culture actually contains certain values that can be a guide for the owners of resources in responding to life;



Figure 3. The Dialectical Process of traditional artists with Art Academics within the Framework of the Process of Transmission and Preservation of Aesthetic Ethical Values (Photo: Documentation Firmansyah, 2023)

2. *Kunstacademisch*

The second element that has a very important role in the mission of preserving cultural values is from the technocrats *kunstacademisch*. From this group were born various conceptions of thinking as

learning materials of cultural value. Another definition of 'culture' according to Margaret Mead's view is a form of human or group learning behavior that occurs in the social environment of society (Nooryan, 2008: 29-30). This concept of thinking contains that culture is closely related to learning behavior as a bridge of knowledge for the artist himself in preserving his cultural heritage with certain concepts.

One of the steps that is usually applied is through community service programs that can be done together with science teachers and science pursuers, in this case, lecturers as science teachers and students as science pursuers. Students as pursuers of knowledge can be maximized to become a medium of research, practicum, or the like. In a study, good intentions alone are not enough but must be accompanied by good methods as well. In relation to this study, there are three specific patterns that are important to apply as a specific method to find answers to a big question.

The first is the *Stages of Observation*. This stage is the initial phase before entering the area that is the object of discourse. The observation stage is very important to be carried out so that certain issues in the destination area can be detected and become the basis of discourse. It is said that because each region actually has a form and variety of local wisdom in accordance with the characteristics and personalities possessed by their respective supporting communities, in this case, especially the Bajo tribe;

The second is related to *the Stages of Communication*. The important thing to do at this stage is to communicate all the big ideas of what the reviewer is doing and will do. Communication is carried out formally and informally. Communication carried out formally is more administrative in nature, namely by sending letters to the local government, including parties to the Village, Lurah, or Sub-district regarding the program being run. Non-formal communication emphasizes more persuasively, namely how the emotional relationship between the reviewer and the local government can be well established so as to get good results;

The third is *the Stages of Socialization*. This stage implies that after the establishment of administrative and persuasive communication from both parties, it is necessary to take the next step that is more macro in nature, namely the *Stages of Socialization* addressed to all residents around the study area through official information from the local government, especially the Village, Lurah or Sub-district governments in the form of letters or oral. The final estuary of the socialization was carried out as an initial illustration to bridge the community's understanding of what was done, when it was done, and where it was done;

The fourth is the *Transmission of Stages*. The next phase is to enter the core phase, namely the transmission of knowledge possessed by experts based on their academic expertise. The most important wisdom that can be obtained from local residents with the process of transmitting knowledge about values, is expected to arouse the aesthetic ethical awareness of the community about the importance of maintaining '*Aesthetic Ethical Behavior*' as a source of local wisdom that unwittingly becomes *social identity* which is unique. The transmission process can be done in a certain formal room such as the Village Hall can also be done in the homes of local

residents. The next step that must be done is to provide education to the local community by providing special training or tutorials to local residents about local problems that are being experienced and are being explored;

The fifth is the *Evaluation of Stages*. The last stage is to evaluate the results of the transmission of knowledge that has just been carried out. The evaluation aims to see the level of success obtained from the results of counseling by means of theoretical competency tests in a dialectical and practical way. On the basis of experience transmitted theoretically and practice, it is hoped that the values that have been built naturally can be maintained. It is easy to form intelligence but to form consciousness is not easy. The most important wisdom that can be obtained from local residents with the transmission of these values carried out by students can actually arouse the awareness and intelligence of people from various levels or circles of both parents and young people and adolescents about the importance of maintaining *Aesthetic Ethical Behavior* as a source of wisdom local. If it is understood that when this can be thought of, it automatically becomes a *Social of Identity* for the local community which is certainly unique, so that consciously or not in the future with the presence of this social identity that is inherent and embedded in the scope of the community of cultural owners becomes an invaluable pride.

This is what the philosopher Hegel really meant, about how man actually builds the world in his head, the realm of thought or consciousness, and not the material world so that the main point actually lies in the knowledge system itself which must be prepared in building a civilization of aesthetic value (Ritzer, 1978: 395). From the concept of thought that has been developed by the philosopher Hegel illustrates that in fact human existence and culture are largely determined by the paradigm of thinking that has aesthetic value because it is the only way to find the world of art that still exists. In line with this understanding, I Made Bandem explained that the cultural potential of so many nations is actually able to increase the dignity, degree, dignity if we realize the importance of humans (Bandem, 2001: 6). The importance of humans meant here is humans as a source of innovative and creative thinking so that there must be positive steps to be able to overcome the problems in question, especially traditional performing arts.

In relation to traditional performing arts discourse, Marco de Marinis holds the view that performing arts is something that is *Multilayer Entity* (Marco de Marinis, 1993: 3). This means that basically a work of performing art, both in the variety of traditional performing arts and the variety of creative performance arts, is actually *multilayered*. Performing arts basically have many certain aspects that are important parts inherent in it including the values that hide behind the artwork itself.



Figure 4. The Process of Observation and Transmission of Aesthetic Ethical Values from Academics (Source: Documentation Firmansyah, 2023)

3. *Kunstbureaucraat*.

One of the important **countries** that play a big role in the discourse on the preservation of local cultural art products comes from the state organizers themselves, in this case, the *Local Government* which is called the term *kunstbureaucraat*. There are two main tasks that must be carried out from this third element, including:

a. *Role of Regulator*

The main task of the government, both central and local governments through their mandated state institutions is to make a special regulation in relation to the traditional arts of the archipelago. The regulation is the result of communication between government executive bureaucrats and campus academics who play an important role in teaching, research, and community service. The results of communication between these two important elements are able to give birth to big ideas about the world of art that artists dream and dream of. The first regulation is to create an *Academic Calendar of Arts and Culture Events*, especially regarding special days of the Bajo community while still focusing on the *prototype* time of the local community which is considered sacred based on traditional norms that have occurred for many years in the cultural circle of the Bajo local community including active participation in state or regional holidays in the form of cultural arts event. The second regulation is to create a *Data Collection of Traditional Local Artists* so that with this pattern the quantity of traditional local artists can be carried out data collection so that it is easier to communicate when there is a basic special need from the government such as an invitation to participate in welcoming any event including other government programs. The third regulation is to create a *Legal Protection* that regulates the governance of local artists under one legal umbrella to protect the rights and obligations of local artists. The fourth is to create an *Arts Organization* that specifically acts as a forum for local artists to express and learn to appreciate art, artists, and works of art.

b. *Role of Contributor*

The government as a state executive body, in addition to acting as a lawmaker, regional legislator or certain regulations, must also have a role as a contributor in solving all problems that have been, are and will be faced by the nation's traditional artists. Traditional

artists are important joints of a nation. Therefore, there needs to be concrete steps or special contributions related to it. The form of this contribution is more related to '*funding*', namely funding for activities handed over to traditional artists who have made regulations in relation to the identification and quantification of traditional local artists. This financial assistance will later be fully used for event operations that will be made. It can be affiliated with government agencies such as the Departments of Education and Culture, research and Technology, or Tourism and Creative Economy. The realization of this concept will greatly help the existence of traditional local artists so that there is no longer a conflict between the emptiness of inner needs and the emptiness of stomach needs that have an impact on the emptiness of thinking.

c. *Role of Promotor*

The special task of the government as the executive body of the government, in addition to being busy thinking about appropriate regulations to apply to traditional local artists and contributing fully from the perspective of funding the activities of traditional art activists, seems to still have a very important role, namely the task of promoting all cultural products of aesthetic ethical value. This step can be taken within the framework of art promotion and can be divided into several territories as the main targets, namely:

- (1) *Mental*. The first target that must be addressed is to one's own before to others. This is very important because different understandings are built that start from within each of us with others. This implies a meaning that is so deep because what is touched is aesthetic awareness to maintain, care for, and promote various cultural artistic heritage without having to spend so much because it is based on an academic understanding one of the functions of art is as a regional or national identity because one of the inhibiting factors in the development of art itself actually comes from many artists themselves;
- (2) *Local*. The direction of the second promotion is aimed at the local area itself, especially in the geographical area of Southeast Sulawesi from the level of Rukun Neighbor, Rukun Warga, Kelurahan, Kecamatan, Regency and City;
- (3) *Regional*. The promotion target in main is more oriented to the regional zone, namely the peninsula of the island of Sulawesi;
- (4) *National*. The national scale promotion target of course refers to the entire unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia from Sabang to Merauke;
- (5) *Global*. The target of promotion on a global scale is a deliberate promotion carried out by governments outside the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, namely all countries in the world including several countries such as America, Australia, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Our ability to explain ourselves well in the international arena can form a special discourse about our nation's culture which ultimately becomes a cultural identity that is recognized by the world *defacto & deyure*. This is actually a synthesis with the special view of Indonesia's leading culturalists who view art as one of the vehicles to legitimize their existence and maintain their identity

(Koentjaraningrat, 1994: 211-220). As stated by Koentjaraningrat art apart from its function as a medium of entertainment, art is a *Self self-identity and Culture Identity* a nation that is a mascot for all nations in the world.

In relation to promotion, a very important thing to think about is *Promotion Media*. The target or target of promotion must be in line with the promotional media itself. In promotion, two basic platforms are commonly used, including (1) *Social Media*. This is closely related to several digital platforms commonly used in the current era of technological development including YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Line, Telegram, Google, WhatsApp, Online radio, News, TV, Radio, and *soft programs* that are deliberately made specifically for promotion; (2) *Social Institutions*. In addition to social media, as previously explained, an important element that can also be supportive in the context of promotion is social institutions both public and private such as educational institutions that can be applied starting from the most basic levels, namely kindergartens, elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, even to universities including the Institute, Academic, and University levels.

If the concepts described above can be carried out according to the concepts that have been conceptualized by experts, then life that leads to aesthetic quality will be achieved. As Damanik views that in a nation, the role of the tourism industry is very important, this is because the contribution of the tourism industry sector plays a role in the economic development of a region or nation. This can be seen in three main aspects, namely the expansion of employment, increasing state foreign exchange, and equitable distribution of development between regions (Damanik, 2005: 11). Contrary to that view, the existence of this government program is a firm step so that how art can be preserved. Only with aesthetic awareness of traditional artists, academic studies of scientists, and the role of government, can preservation be achieved and indirectly this can have logical consequences on the opening of independent employment through the packaging of tourist art.

In relation to art as an aspect of tourism, it is actually a future industry that promises if packaged properly and correctly by experts. Learn from the experience of the Yogyakarta government. According to Mubyarto's view, the key to the success of Yogyakarta is the development of tourism as an industry in addition to making Yogyakarta a city of education. For example, in 1960 the city of Yogyakarta was classified as the third poorest city in Indonesia, but after approximately thirty years of tourism industry development, the city of Yogyakarta quickly turned into the third city in terms of prosperity in Indonesia after Jakarta and East Kalimantan (Oka, 2008: 14-16).

In line with efforts to maintain the existence of the nation's cultural arts as a tourist asset, Timbul Haryono believes that there is basically a form of performing art, both traditional and modern, will survive in the supporting community environment as long as it is still needed and has an important social function in people's lives (Timbul Haryono, 2008: 132). This view is very philosophical

because the sustainability of a nation's artistic heritage of cultural arts can survive while still having a very important position in its cultural circle so the understanding of these values must be transmitted to the community either through customary institutions, community institutions, government institutions or families.



Figure 5. The Dialectical Process Between Bureaucracy and Academics Related to the Preservation of Aesthetic Ethical Values of Traditional Arts (Source: Documentation Firmansyah, 2023)

C. CONCLUSION

Art becomes important and also precarious in the frame of social life, because of its contribution to world civilization. Art is understood that art is not only capable of giving birth to pleasure or pleasure but philosophically art is called art because art is a special science that manifests itself in a special way. Based on the results of an in-depth study related to the phenomenon of preservation of local cultural wisdom values of coastal communities in Mekar Village, Soropia District, Konawe Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province, several important points can be learned that can be used as a wisdom or special guidance, that there are three most basic important elements or elements to be pondered in an effort to preserve the values of local cultural wisdom of the Bajo community.

First, the preservation of cultural arts must start from the internal circle of the owners of cultural art products themselves, in this case, they are at the *unstbeoefenaar* of traditional local artists as art practitioners who are born, live, and develop in the domain; The second is that the role of *kunstacademisch* is very important, for that the second element acts as a processor of every problem that exists, is and will be faced by the owner of culture because from it is a source of knowledge that will guide the direction of strategic policy towards aesthetic goals; Third, the role of the *kunstabureaucraat* is also very important because the final estuary of everything that has been done by the two previous elements will be concluded by the third element so that the position of art is no longer for the needs of art itself but art also affects the need to improve ideological and economic quality.

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