

“Becoming White”: The Problem of Fine Art Neocolonization in Postcolonial Era

“Menjadi Putih”: Persoalan Neokolonisasi Seni Rupa di Era Postkolonial

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Abstract

One of the crucial-cultural matters experienced by all colonized nations, such as Indonesia, is their incapability in becoming free from the shackles of colonialism syndrome not to mention in fine arts. Indeed, this study focuses on firstly, describing the construction of Western character hegemony found in fine arts in Indonesia; and secondly, identifying a possible solution for the issue of Western hegemony in Indonesian fine arts. The qualitative-hermeneutic approach was used to explain that phenomenon. The data of this research are based on data sources of Indonesian art phenomena, which are diachronic in nature, to obtain a macro-fundamental landscape of meaning, as opposed to synchronic ones whose focus is narrow or specific. The research instrument is the researcher himself, as a human instrument. While the technical analysis of the data is descriptive qualitative. The analysis of data revealed the following results. West hegemony has become an obsession curse beyond all of desire, in its cultural performance in this postcolonial era. This is what merely called the ‘becoming white’ phenomenon. In Indonesian contexts, the construction of this phenomenon particularly in fine arts world is manifested in its hegemonic historiography embodiment that is dissolved in the Western centric mainstream. Hence, a set of strategic cultural processes are necessary to be conducted for the sake of finding the best solution towards that problem. And one of the processes is by conducting methodological deconstruction over all knowledge epistemologies including fine arts knowledge existed and owned by this nation.

Keywords: *becoming white, neocolonization, fine arts postcolonization.*

Abstrak

Salah satu persoalan kultural krusial yang dialami oleh semua bangsa bekas jajahan Barat termasuk Indonesia, adalah ketidakmampuannya melepaskan diri dari belenggu sindrom kolonialisme, meskipun sudah berada di era postkolonial. Dalam konteks keindonesiaan misalnya, persoalan itu, terefleksi nyaris berada di semua sistem pranata peradaban yang ada, termasuk juga di dunia seni rupa, baik di tingkat artefak, sosiofak, maupun ideofak, yang terhegemoni oleh pengaruh Barat. Untuk itu, kajian khusus ini berfokus pada: pertama, mendeskripsikan konstruksi hegemoni karakter Barat yang ditemukan dalam seni rupa di Indonesia; dan kedua, mencari jalan keluar dari persoalan hegemoni Barat dalam seni rupa Indonesia tersebut. Pendekatan kualitatif-hermeneutik digunakan untuk

menjelaskan fenomena tersebut. Analisis data yang ditemukan selama penelitian ini mengungkapkan hasil berikut. Hegemoni Barat acapkali menjadi sebuah kutukan obsesi, yang melampaui dari seluruh hasrat apa pun, dalam proses kinerja kulturasi di era postkolonial ini. Inilah sebetuk fenomena yang diistilahkan sebagai "*becoming white*", yang dalam dunia seni rupa Indonesia termanifesto dalam wujud hegemoniknya historiografi yang larut dalam mainstream Baratsentris. Oleh karena itu, perlu serangkaian upaya proses kulturasi strategis bagi outlet pemecahan atas persoalan tersebut, di antaranya adalah dengan melakukan dekonstruksi metodologi atas segala epistemi pengetahuan termasuk juga pengetahuan seni rupa yang ada dan dimiliki dalam diri oleh bangsa ini.

Kata kunci: *menjadi putih, neokolonisasi, postkolonisasi seni rupa*

Introduction

The existence of works of art, as with any other cultural text, from a sociological point of view, is essentially a representation of a group of ideas that are never separated from the ties of their cultural context or culture bound (Fenner, 2014; Edmonstone, 2019). Many experts assert that the existence of art is never separated from the social background of the people (Fuente, 2007; Liguori, 2017; Dewi, KSR, Andayani, & Eko Wardhani, 2017; Carrabine, 2018). Therefore, the existence of art either directly or indirectly, always provides a space for reflection or reflection of the life of the community where the work is located (Izzo, 2009; Polyudova, 2021). In a certain diametrical sense, the difference is only limited to the mode of expression. On the one hand, there are works of art that are expressed as lateral-denotative, but on the other hand, there are other works of art that appear symbolic-connotative. But both the lateral and the symbolic, both depart from the same imitative intuitive reasoning, which in the Platonian and Aristotelian perspectives is termed a mimetic phenomenon (Halliwell, 2009; Taussig, 2018).

In this context of understanding, therefore ontologically, the existence of art can never be interpreted solely as something that is only associated with the world or the personal universe of the artist but it must also consider the socio-cultural domain as the environment in which the creative process is based. In line with this view, Smith (2014:120) conveyed, "The artist, as it were, takes not only his canvas, his colors, or his model to paint, but also the art that is given him formally, technically, and ideologically, within his own culture".

Even if it is true that each artistic text produced by each artist has different and even unique representational tendencies, it is by no means sufficient as a valid argumentation building to reduce and even fully claim that art is a truly silent self subjective space. Because as subjective and silent as anything, the world that is believed and owned in the inner space of the artist is related to the idea of his work, in fact, it also always departs and moves from the socio-cultural level as a framework for its footing. In the perspective of Bourdieu, all cultural practices, including art, are always in the field and arena of determining cultural habituation (Swartz, 2012; Segre, 2014).

Therefore, the existence of every art text always exists and is rooted in what is termed the cultural matrix (Madden, 2005; Sayuti, 2014; Ainslie, H. & Drummond, 2015). According to this perspective, Manghani, S., Piper, A. & Simons (2006:267) said, "Culture, of multiple sites of meaning and perspective, each depending on the current social and cultural matrix surrounding the viewer and viewed". Artworks, therefore, do not have

historical-autonomous values in themselves, but rather are on a historical trajectory, in the socio-cultural space and time in which they exist. A relatively equal understanding is also put forward by Stuppler (2014:136), namely "Artworks, have no 'values-in-themselves'. Artistic values are historical realities, existing only from the moment they are constructed and accordingly embodied within specific cultural contexts". This idea also received confirmation from Crowther (2009:23), saying that, "To everything about art, the terms in which this significance emerges are, indeed, bound up with specific historical and cultural contexts".

The content of messages or ideas in the world of art, whatever their form, sociologically always provides images, in which various reflections or reflections on the meaningful experience of humanity, cannot be completely separated from the cultural context that surrounds them. Hanquinet, L. & Savage (2015:162) argue, "The idea of the art world provides a useful imagery for thinking about networks and culture-for understanding how people are related by their descriptions of meaning, their perception of objects qualities, and for understanding how objects (and ideas) are in turn related by people". Such a sociological view of art thus rejects the model of the meaning of art and aesthetics which is believed by philosophers and historians (Croce, 1981) for example, which is influenced by Kantian and Hegelian ideas, namely placing it in an ordinance that tends to reflect the ideal particularity of the artist's world, which deals with a given intuitive dictum.

Departing from that, in the Platonian and Aristotelian perspectives as stated above, the nature of the performance and creative process of an artist, such as a painter, dancer, musician, filmmaker, or others, when involved with a series of treatises on the production process of his work, it existentially cannot deny the entity of intimacy with the existing landscape of its surrounding cultural reality. That belief, as emphasized by Carroll (2012:20) mentions that, "What painters try to do, on the Platonic-Aristotelian view, is to reproduce the appearance of things-to copy them-not only people, but object and event. The view of painting parallels the view of their culture".

From that line of reasoning, the various struggles of human experience that often become the awareness of many representations of art texts, never have meaningful dimensions that are solely focused on the artist's world, but on the contrary often invite interpretations that go beyond them, which are placed in a larger universe, that is, the socio-cultural construction of the community. In the construction of this conscious belief, the implication is that every presentation of an art text, regardless of its uniqueness based on the artist's self-expression, transcends all of that, that it always reflects the particularity of the group of ideas of collective values or togetherness, which is also always bound or framed in a certain space and time that can be explained.

This is what in the cultural dictum is termed an identity marker: something that is often interpreted as important in every community entity as a construction called "community". When talking about identity, what has been termed the principle of "similarity" awareness among its members, becomes something very valuable for the construction of knowledge, besides that cultural collective action is more likely to be structured and carried out (Ojoajogwu, 2006; Fecho, B. & Clifton, 2016). Brubaker & Cooper (2000:7) also convey the same idea in the following expressions:

Understood as an especially collective phenomenon, "identity" denotes a fundamental and consequential sameness among members of the group category. This may be understood objectively (as a sameness "in itself") or subjectively (as an experienced, felt, or perceived

sameness). This sameness is expected to manifest itself in solidarity, in shared dispositions or consciousness, or collective action.

In almost the same way, Camillo (2015:35) put forward the following ideas:

Cultural identity is the identity or feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality, or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. In this way, cultural identity is both characteristics of the individual and of the culturally identical group of members sharing the same cultural identity.

When the whole construction of ideas about art in an inseparable relationship with the conditions of the socio-cultural environment of the people, is contextualized in Indonesian discourse, then there is a critical-crucial problem, that is, when the discourse is projected from a postcolonial perspective. Postcolonial is a group of worrying cultural landscape phenomena that exist, are experienced, and suffered by nations of former Western colonies, including Indonesia, especially related to the problem of their acute mentality syndrome, namely as a nation that suffers from an inferiority complex (Bosma, 2012; Yitah, 2019; Skórczewski, D. & Polakowska, 2020). Regarding the problem of the complex inferior syndrome as referred to, it can be traced from the construction of cultural representations of the ex-colonial nation, both in the realm of artifacts, socio-facts, and even in the ideo-fact context, which manifests for example in the form of distrust of ownership of their cultural existence.

The derivation of this problem can be traced from the strong obsession of the former colony to manage all its cultural performances, which are often based on perspectives that are completely imitated by the former colonizers. In postcolonial discourse, this phenomenon has often been termed the issue of "becoming white", a pejorative phrase about a fascination with Western white culture (Garner, 2007; Hale, 2010; Labador, A. & Zhang, 2021). Semantically, the concept of "becoming white" is always connected with the issue of "cultural whiteness" which places the "white West" nation with all its images of supremacy (white supremacy) (Clarke, S. & Garner, 2010; Lopez, 2012; Kelly, 2021). This phenomenon then produces psychological trauma in the former Eastern colonies, which always places the white figure of the West in the superior meaning (Dunkley, 2011; Tibebu, 2012), and conversely, the nation itself is in an inferior psychological space (Hurley, 2000; Cobel-Tokarska, 2021).

In the stretch of a long historical trajectory, this phenomenon has created a landscape of narrow horizons, even including insights based on the potential possessed by the culture of their nation? This phenomenon, culturally, is a repetition of almost the same historical trauma in the past when this nation was still in the dark era of colonization. The construction of culture based on the "becoming white" issue and "cultural whiteness", in other words, can be termed a form of neocolonialism (Ritzer, 2004; Keller, 2012); Milders, 2021) which is nothing more than a form of postcolonialism (McLeod, 2010; Clarke, 2021).

In the realm of Indonesian art, for example, the issue of white Western hegemony can be easily traced, from the authentic facts of the historiographical landscape phenomenon of art with all its grand narratives, which have a very strong Western scent and aura of the mainstream. What happened then was, as if this nation had no treatise

on the identity or nature of its own artistic and cultural identity, which was not only worthy of being proud of but even made as part of a way of life or a standard.

The phenomenon of "becoming white" concerns in the postcolonial era, as experienced by the Indonesian people, the portrait becomes even more dramatic, especially if contextualized in the globalization discourse in the 4.0 revolution era, where thanks to the influence of the information communication technology revolution, the potential intensity of intrusion and even the infiltration of foreign cultures, especially the West, is increasingly massive and explosive (Alberti, 2014; Oloka-Onyango, 2015). Indeed, when it comes to globality, there is potential for ambiguity in it. On the one hand, the opportunity for easy encounters with various cultures from various places in various parts of the world, which have the potential to enrich each other (Yue, 2018; Heyman, 2021). But on the other hand, there is also a chance of the possibility of impoverishing, damaging, or even destroying it (Dirlik, 2002; Pieke, 2021).

Method

The method used in this research is a naturalistic-holistic qualitative category (Lapan, SD, Quartaroli, MT & Riemer, 2011; Mirhosseini, SA & Noori, 2019), whose approach is hermeneutic, centered on interpretive activities (Lucas, 2012; Bulhof, 2012). The data and data sources for this research are various phenomena representing the existence of the world and Indonesian fine arts disciplines, both in the community and in various library sources. The data on the phenomena of the art world as intended, are more structured in the context of a diachronic setting, which is based on various historical traces of the existence of these phenomena from pre-Indonesian times to modern Indonesia. As emphasized by (Gerring, 2012:225) that a diachronic-based data perspective, which tends to be broad, is better in presenting a fundamental meaning of causal relationships on social phenomena compared to a synchronic perspective whose focus is narrow or specific (Robinson, 2011). The selection of sample data in this study was by purposive sampling method or known by other terms judgmental sampling (DePoy, E & Gitlin, 2013:169) The main instrument of this research is the researcher himself as a human instrument (Meloy, 2006; Brown, B J. & Baker, 2007:71). The data analysis technique is descriptive qualitative, especially by using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's model (Miles, MBA, Huberman, M., & Saldaña, 2013), which includes activities: data collection, display, and discussion, and concluding.

Results and Discussion

"Becoming White" and the Hegemony of Western Historiography of Fine Arts

The issue of the encounter of culture and art which leads to a tendency for negative impacts that appear to be more forward, if contextualized in an Indonesian setting, will soon find significant verification. Fine art as a part of the representation of Indonesian identity markers in its latest current trend, is relatively experiencing various worrying crises. The crisis of aesthetic identity and Indonesian art, especially concerning the issue of the strong influence of hegemony on Western art and aesthetics can be identified, both in the context of the wider world of art and art in a narrow context.

First, in the world of Indonesian art, this problem can be illustrated by the fact that various practices in the history of art, which seemed very long in the past, especially since the modern era and even seem to be sustainable to this day, seem to have never been able to be separated from the trend of art practice in Western countries. This can be verified, for example, from the existence of the history of modern Indonesian art,

whose historical momentum has been revealed since the era of Raden Saleh, which was followed later by *Mooi Indie*, *Persagi*, the New Art Movement. Even to the present contemporary era, it can be seen how the West has become the main and the strongest hegemonic patron (Burhan, 2006).

Second, in the context of art science, Western syndrome and hegemony can also be seen from the strong influence of Western art perspective reasoning which is used to construct theories or concepts that are used as the foundation for understanding almost all artistic praxis awareness in Indonesia. The dimensions of this problem can be identified from the increasing loss of Indonesian-Eastern aesthetic roots whose markers that tend to be based on the level of sense-transcendence (Newcomb, J. A. & Duquette, 2004), then replaced with the values of Western Aesthetics, which are heavily based on the level of reason, material that is immensity (Hutchins, 2014).

As it is understood, during this time stereotypes of cultural awareness have developed which are indeed differences between the West and the East, where the West tends to be dominated by immanence awareness (Bazzano, 2012; Finlayson, 2014), while on the contrary, the East is transcendence (Vicini, 2017; Knauff, 2019). The immanence dimension in this Western tradition is said to be mainly supported by the main pillars of the philosophical tradition of rationalism and materialism which it believes in (Ekmeleddin, 2013; Thomas, 2014). Meanwhile, for the dimension of transcendence that is typical of the east, on the contrary, it is supported by the mainstream of philosophical consciousness which is mainly based on the level of intuition and even spiritualism which is religious in nature (Ascari, 2013; Ram-Prasad, 2013).

In the transcendence point of view, which has become the tendency of the philosophical foundations of eastern art and culture, including Indonesianness, there is a tendency to imply the negation of all things that have immanent meaning in life, so that there is a tendency to replace concrete typicality with the particularity of abstraction of meaning (Sutrisno, 2005; Hamersma, 2008). This is seen in the various artifacts of Indonesian arts, as known for their oldest historical roots, for example, wayang, keris, batik, gamelan, temples, and many others, where the spirit of creation is not used for something profane, but this early treatise is on the contrary sacred. This is one of the historical trace pieces of evidence of the phenomenon of artistic expression with the peculiarities of eastern aesthetics which tend to mean transcendence (Figley, 2013; Genov, 2016). On the other hand, in the representation of arts in the domain of Western culture, especially in the modern West, the mainstream tends to be the opposite, namely, to idealize the domain of immanence in the awareness of cultural praxis as well as arts (Taylor, 2007; Steinvorth, 2013).

The issue of Western hegemony that exists in the realm of practical discourse in the history of Indonesian fine arts, more operationally, would also be able to be observed not only in the context of the historical framework for the creation of works of art in fine arts as stated above, but also in the realm of applied arts. The view of postcolonial problems that is almost the same also occurs in the context of the realm of applied art, for example, it can be examined and verified in the two sub-disciplines of applied art, namely those in the world of design and craft.

In the design world, for example in visual communication design and product design in both micro and macro contexts, which become the mainstream in Indonesia, with all its grand narratives, it turns out that the landscape is also almost all Western. This is

reflected through the various forms of the architectural construction of various buildings whose landscapes appear dominant in almost all sites of metropolitan cities, for example, hotels, apartments, stations, terminals, airports, ports, hospitals, minimarkets, schools and campuses, houses, parks, including the small knick-knacks of the markers that accompany the management of its beauty, as well as the prototypes of other world metropolitan cities. All of these portray the influence of the West that is so perfectly attached (Elshestawy, 2008; Normand, 2014; Acker, WV & Mical, 2020; Neves, 2020).

This phenomenon, when examined more deeply and piously, is how it is not only epidemic in metropolitan cities, but also has become the same norm in almost all corners of villages, because the city has always been the reference for the main modernization project. Just as an illustration, for example, how the villages throughout the archipelago, no longer intimidate the authentic architecture of the region, because it has been replaced with various architectural models of Western bases, with names such as minimalist style, Italian, Dutch, French, Spanish and the like.

With the typical Western prototype house architecture, the part that is considered important and main is no longer the front room, living room, or *pendhapa*, as is the classic in the architectural tradition of regional houses, as a symbol of high respect for the great *bêbrayan* living system together or communitarianism (Kian-Woon, 2000; Hillenbrand, 2010), but rather is the personal space or room, as a symbol of belief in the value of Western philosophy of individualism that is dominant in the construction of its consciousness (Friedman, 2008; Metz, 2015; Peters, MA & Mika, 2017).

In addition, the awareness of Western philosophy in the architectural building of the house also derives other values, which are not always in line with the Eastern philosophical tradition, namely the principles of efficiency and effectiveness contained in it. Everything that is ineffective and inefficient, in modern Western understanding, is interpreted as irrational, and therefore must be avoided (Smith, 2013; Noor, NHM, Shajar, SAB & Idris, 2015). From this, it can be understood how almost all modern house and building architectures do not care and attach importance to what is called ornamentation, which is traditionally identified as a detail (Javanese: *njlimêt*, *ngrawit*), which is considered irrelevant, effective, and efficient and meaningless.

Then, in the another subdiscipline of design, namely visual communication design, for example, the concern for the hegemony of Western aesthetics, is very thick. It can be seen, for example, through advertising discourse in the mass media. The various messages of Western hegemonic signs are present in the advertising discourse, including in the form of, for example, an obsession with the Western body, superlatives, and speed, as a form of value system that is considered to have *eye-catching* magical powers (Koschnick, 2016), so that it is idealized.

Regarding the sign system in the form of an obsession with Western bodies, it can be seen from the advertising discourse that tends to use Western or at least Indo figures (of Western descent) as the main model, which is considered to have a higher appeal, when compared to local figures. The use of the Indo figure as an attraction for the advertising model, it has happened a very long time ago, namely since the days of the Dutch East Indies (Luttikhuis, 2013; Jacobson, 2018).

Meanwhile, related to the obsession with superlatives, it can be seen from the sign system in advertisements that often exploits various terms starting with "the most-" such as best, biggest, highest, most, greatest, foremost, all of which are typical Western value systems, as derived from materialist philosophy. In that superlative culture, what

is being chased is luxury (Saglia, 2010; Kapferer, JN & Bastien, 2012; Gardetti, MA & Muthu, 2015), not the other way around the value of simplicity or modesty as idealized in eastern philosophy (Mom, 2014; Basit, 2017).

As for the hegemony of the issue of the value of speed and acceleration, it can also be seen from the advertising discourse that often uses the term "fast" or even "instantly" as an attraction. The use of the term portraying the obsession towards the speed dictum unwittingly is a derivative of the philosophy of instances (Redhead, 2004; Nguyen, DT & Fussell, 2012); whose meaning is not so in line with eastern philosophy. The cultural result is, how later in modern society, Eastern culture tends to affirm the values of silence and prudence, as classically known in the Javanese expression *alon-alon waton kèlakon, grêmêt-grêmêt waton slamêt* which is very positive in meaning because it is related to the behavior of prudence, gradually disappears, and is replaced by a culture of speed, because it is often misunderstood as a form of culture of indolence, passivity in culture (Keese, 2014; Shahjahan, 2015; Merviö, 2019).

The phenomenon of the concept of speed, when examined and studied further, turns out not only to occur in discourse or advertising culture but also becomes an almost or almost the same scene in the wider cultural representation in the life and awareness of modern or postmodern society today. In short, the notion of the term speed has become one of the most important modes of being in the modern and postmodern cultural universe (Andrewes, 2003; Tomlinson, 2007; Rosa, 2010).

Testimonial notes that describe how praxis and awareness of aesthetics and art are concerned in the context of contemporary Indonesians, as mentioned, are still very likely to be extended, as a proof of the reality of this nation, which until now actually still suffers from the syndrome of Western culture. The West, with all its achievements in the peaks of science and culture, has become a kind of magnet for the possibility of being used as all references in the whole process of cultural performance, including art. This obsession with the West has become a kind of belief that is almost close to faith. This phenomenon, if we draw a historical stretch into the past, has something to do with the inferiority syndrome that is typical of colonial nations (Adesida, O. & Oteh, 2005; Jackson, 2010; Nayar, 2010).

Based on this fact, the colonial phenomenon has indeed often resulted in the burden of trapping the problem of a distinctive cultural irony ambiguity syndrome, namely a traumatic syndrome and at the same time inferiority. The first, the traumatic syndrome is related to various colonial experiences that have been experienced by most of the colonized nations. But strangely enough, even though the trauma of colonialism was so great, it pierced the heart, and wounded the conscience of this nation, from generation to generation—because of the fascination of the West with all its great narratives of indescribable prowess—it was not enough to justify taking a distance from it. This is presumably what is termed the curse of "ambivalence" which is indeed one of the distinctive keywords in postcolonial theory that is very difficult to decipher (Easthope, 2008; Bivan, AD, Iwokatok, UE & Agye, 2018).

In the entanglement of this issue, on the one hand, the ex-colonial nations really hated the Western invaders, but at the same time, on the other hand, the colonized nations, not only really missed their colonial masters but even loved them. The West with all the achievements of its citizens has finally become the configuration of the face of the former colony itself. So, instead of being considered as the colonizer/colonial, the West, on the contrary, appears as a savior god who is always sorely missed.

Those are some small notes related to the phenomenon of postcolonialism which is currently and seems to be continuing in the world's consciousness as well as art and art in the Indonesian context. Postcolonialism is thus a treatise on the continuation of the colonial epic in the post-colonial era. The meaning of postcolonial itself is etymologically derived from English, namely: "post", which means "after or later than" (after), and "colonial" which means "relating to a colony or colonialism" (Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. & Tiffin, 2013). It is a phenomenon that refers to the issue of colonialism in the post-colonial era as intended. It includes a broad dimension in the cultural context. Hiddleston (2014:24) revealed, "Postcolonialism consists of the multiple political, economic, cultural, and philosophical responses to colonialism. It is a broad term that is used to refer to effects following the beginning of colonial rule". This understanding is in line with the terminology of nationality and national identity itself, which cannot only be reduced to solely related to the area of ideology and politics, but also must be placed in the context of cultural multidimensionality or culture in general. Smith (1991: vii), in this regard, conveys his ideas as follows:

Cannot understand nations and nationalism simply as an ideology or form of politics but must treat them as a cultural phenomenon as well. Nationalism, ideology, and movement must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiment, and symbolism.

Another thing that needs to be emphasized is that in addition to the cross-sectoral scope of the spread of colonialism in the context of postcolonialism, the issue of cultural colonization, which is typical in this post-colonial era, works more persuasive-hegemonic (McLaren, 1995; Bignall, 2011), compared to the time of physical colonialism that occurred in the past which was mainly carried out violently (Hawley, 1998; Parry, 2004). The problem of postcolonialism in the world and art science in the context of Indonesians as intended, has also never occurred in a cultural format of violence, but on the contrary in persuasive ways that seem very natural, because it is veiled through the scientific system. The West, which is assumed to be value-free, even though the authentic fact is the cause, is loaded with various ideological contents in it (Lewis, 2005; Fletcher, 2013).

Decolonization Methodology: Alternative Outlet Restoration

Based on the points of view that have been conveyed above, there is an important note that can be said as an alternative way out, when faced with various postcolonial problems or problems in all fields of culture. Such efforts include, as suggested by a professor of indigenous education from the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand, named Smith (2012), namely that the nations that are suffering from this colonization syndrome, to carry out what is termed "methodological decolonization", on all historical-epistemic constructions of knowledge and culture that they have so far, including in this context, are of course also the world and the science of arts.

Decolonization is a form of strategic cultural activity, in the form of developing self-sensitivity to the possibility of holding a rite of interpretation of all possessions as well as the epistemology in a culture that has been owned by colonized nations so far, many of which are almost unconsciously turned out to be based on the construction of knowledge possessed by the former colonizers in the past. In this case, Smith (2012) offers a new alternative in carrying out the history of culture work with the perspective of the nation itself, with the intention that the former colony has its own story from its

nation that truly represents its nation regardless of the Western mindset, as has been history for a very long time.

Likewise, presumably in the context of the world and science of arts, the suggestion for the decolonization of this methodology, can also be implemented, considering that so far, this nation is too rich in the universe and its artistic knowledge. One way that can be initiated and carried out in a strategic imperative, among them is by carrying out a series of reorientation and revitalization processes of various cultural processes which are always based on the possibility of getting closer to the rich treasures of ownership of cultural and artistic values that exist within the body of this nation.

Such a methodological decolonization process can be assumed as a form of political restoration effort in the form of a self-cultural renaissance. It is a relatively similar phenomenon has been carried out in the dynamics of the trajectory of Western civilization, when they were in the renaissance period in the past (Hedesan, GD & Rudbøgg, 2021). This was taken by Western civilization at that time, with the rite of reviving and or revitalizing the basic values of the traditions of the past Western civilization, especially in the era of the Greek and Roman golden ages, as the basis for the development of science, including the arts.

Arguments that can be built from the importance of promoting cultural and artistic values which are extracted from the roots of the cultural tradition of the self, are because of their relative existence which has been able to become an expensive symbol of binding social solidarity. What should be an inevitability of knowledge is that whatever is related to the beliefs held by a society, it is not a matter of right or wrong, but rather is related to the extent to which it plays a role in fulfilling the social functions of the life of the community.

Traditional cultural values as a type of knowledge system are an important part of the system of communicating in life. Therefore, human life, and by itself the relationship between humans, is indeed controlled or cannot be separated at all from the various belief systems or beliefs that they have (Aligwekwe, 2008). If the system grows and develops, belief or belief is inevitably accepted as a sign of truth (Weil, M., Reisch, MS, & Ohmer, 2012). People's beliefs about something may cross the line of general logic, but such beliefs are culturally not to blame (Barthes, 1998; Trungpa, 2016).

In conditions where people believe in traditional values, including art, of course, as truth and something that is believed, it allows the emergence of communal solidarity (Hasanuddin, 2016). Therefore, this phenomenon can function as a form of argument just as science, inherited rules, and practiced for generations. It is a form of memories, ideas, or decisions that are believed.

Conclusion

Based on the narrative explanation above, it can be conveyed that the idea of the importance of Indonesian artistic and cultural identity is unavoidable. However, what needs to be confirmed in understanding identity both concerning the realm of aesthetics or culture, in general, is that its existence must always be constructed in meaning as a process of becoming. In the construction of this process format, various changes, especially the result of encounters with cultures outside or outside of oneself, may become a necessity that cannot be avoided at all. Culture and the identity of culture and the arts, thus, are constantly undergoing transformation and change, along with the currents of historical change itself.

What is a note of crucial concern, among others, is how the profile of the Indonesian nation as a former Western colony, in its cultural governance in the post-independence era, still shows a relatively similar pattern compared to the previous colonial era. Some of them appear in the form of the becoming white syndrome, which considers white Western culture to be superior to their inferior cultural existence. Reflection on these issues is evident both at the level of artifacts, socio-facts, and ideo-facts, in all systems of cultural institutions, including of course in the world of art.

One thing that can be attempted as an alternative outlet for these conditions and problems, which has a very strategic meaning, is to carry out a process of methodological decolonization of all epistemic constructions of knowledge, including in the world of art, which is based on the level of one's cultural roots.

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