Conference Paper

The National Gallery of Indonesia (GNI): Cultural Policy and Multiculturalism. Study of the “Pameran Seni Rupa Nusantara” 2001-2017 at GNI

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Abstract

This study focuses on the role of the National Gallery of Indonesia (GNI) in maintaining multiculturalism through the policies implemented, namely initiating the activities of the Pameran Seni Rupa Nusantara (PSRN). The PSRN exhibition is one of the GNI’s most important programs because it gives space to the artists of the archipelago - not just Java and Bali - to present works of modern-contemporary art rooted in local wisdom. As a nation that has the characteristics of pluralism, the spirit of multiculturalism in art has become very significant, especially in the middle of the Disruption era which is "full of uncertainty". Earlier studies have suggested that the aesthetic concept of Indonesia was based on Indonesian cultural diversity, but these studies do not specifically address GNI policies. This article uses qualitative research with a historical method approach together with a material culture analysis approach. The results of the study show that GNI as the State Cultural Institute plays an important role in maintaining multiculturalism through exhibition events involving roles and figures.

Keywords: The National Gallery of Indonesia, Cultural Policy, Pameran Seni Rupa Nusantara, Multiculturalism.

1. Introduction

Writing about the cultural institution policy is very important in the study of fine arts, because through various policies implemented on the event involving the history actors and the figures there is a learning process for quality improvement Culture in the future. One of the cultural institutions in

Indonesia is National Gallery of Indonesia (GNI) which has a role as a center of visual documentation of modern-contemporary art. The formation of GNI was coincided with the era of reformation and also era of globalization. The two important events strongly influence the development of Indonesian contemporary art, both in the context of conceptual dynamics in the work also in the context of the global market. By criticizing
the development of contemporary art nowadays, it becomes important to read and reinterpret the role of GNI, with the context of contemporary.

In the middle of rapid globalization identity very important, among others through the potential of cultural art that is owned by the nation of Indonesia. The works created by Indonesian artists must continue to be conditioned with cultural strength and given a good appreciation space, among other things through the policy of organizing an art exhibition of Nusantara in GNI. GNI was chosen in consideration the center of the Indonesian contemporary Visual Arts documentation. GNI has tasks and Staples as a center for collecting, reviewing, documenting, maintaining and securing the collection, exhibitions and publications, programs of creativity and appreciation, expansion of communities and network of cooperation. GNI has a significant role in the development of contemporary art that is through various roles and functions, among others, by maintaining the spirit of multiculturalism. Etymologically, multiculturalism comes from the word multicultural and “ism”. Multiculture has the meaning of “multi”, “many” or sometimes called “plural” so a multicultural conclusion is “a lot of culture”. While “ism” is a word that refers to an ideological meaning, so that the multiculturalismen is an understanding of the state's ideologically meaningful meaning of “multi culture”, Indonesia is a country consisting of diverse cultures.

Given the field of study is closely related to social phenomenon, this research approach uses qualitative methodology, by looking at the context of the problem as a whole by focusing the research on a process and not necessary emphasizing on the outcome. Historical method consists of heuristic stages, which is a stage related to the search of data and the discovery of raw material, in this case are the works of 61millennial artists. The next stage, verification, is to select the works of art, based on their themes, events, characters and roles. Then interpretation or explanation, the process of deciphering or delivering meaning and coupling the elements that have been obtained from the previous stages, with the aim to obtain a collection of facts that have a meaning (fact of meaning). Then historiography, historical writing which departs from the facts that have been tested and compiled beforehand. Material Culture analysis approach, shows how history may be read and interpreted through objects/artefacts/finding used by artists in their works. Studies on Material Culture have been written by a number of researchers, and conclude that several years ago, historians may be skeptical about the value of "object" or "artifact" involvement. The phrase "material culture" itself is equally novel to the study of History, which is generally limited to the field of research on ancient times (pre-historic and antiquated). Yet today, the awareness of
historical writing with the involvement of material culture has grown and some historical textbooks involve “visual” and “material,” cultures:

“The term material culture is defined in different ways depending on the disciplinary contexts within which the term is used. Historian have been using the label in a rather loose fashion, and sometimes simply take it to mean “object”. (Gerritsen, Anne and Giorgio Riello. Writing Material Culture History. London, New Dehi, New York, Sydney: Bloomsbury. 2015 :15)

How meaning is born between the selection of an artist’s daily objects/articles with the reality that is happening in his era, is the highlight of material culture review. That meaning and symbols implied in the works of art are not only a personal/individual property belonging to the artist, but a broader social significance at the public level collectively. Research using data sources such as visual objects and artifacts, is part of the writing of art history. The writing of art history is not a sub discipline of history, as it largely concerns art specifically, and the perception of qualitative hierarchy in it – although this discriminatory aspect of disciplines has been increasingly questioned by some practitioners in recent years. It is said that in Western culture there are three very important interrelated institutions, (1) Dealers, salesroom staffs, and collectors; (2) Museums and general gallery staffs and behind them, public funding bureaucrats; (3) Academic art historians, editors and (as junior partners) critics.

The formation of GNI has a long history with several switching ownership. Based on the data of certificate 81 dated February 8, 1886, land and building complex that became the forerunner of GNI, originally ownership on behalf of Elisabeth Maria Debora Ambrosina van Rijck, widow and heir of François Junius van Hemert who died On May 11, 1885. Van Rijck’s widow is represented by a curator named Jan Dinger who is also a member of the firm Tiedeman and Van Kerchem in Batavia selling the land under his hands to the Gospel Church Council in Batavia (College Van Diakenen der Evangelische Gemeente te Batavia) on 28 May 1900. The Church Council of the Gospel then rents out the land and the building to be used as schools and dormitories for female students in Batavia. On December this church council sold the land in Koningsplein Oost Sectie to the Advanced School Foundation for the female students in Batavia (Stichting Hoogere Burger School voor meisjes te Batavia). (Pusat Dokumentasi Arsitektur. Penelitian Gedung Cagar Budaya Gedung Pameran Utama dan Gedung Serbaguna Galeri Nasional Indonesia. Jakarta:Dirjen Kebudayaan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan RI. 2015:18-20)
The GNI building was later used as a school and the boarding house was later developed with the opening of the Bataviaasch Lyceum by accepting male students. In 1923, the name of the secondary School foundation for female students in Batavia (Stichting Hoogere Burger School voor meisjes te Batavia) was renamed to the Carpentier Alting Foundation. The school name was also hanged to Carpentier Alting Stichting Scholen (C.A. S School). On August 1, 1958, the Carpentier Alting Foundation was transformed into the Raden Saleh Foundation. The school's name was also transformed into the school Pamardi Soenoe (Mardi Soenoe). Until the time of President Sukarno's government on the ladder of 27 February 1961, made Freemason Indonesia as a forbidden organization. This led to all activities of the Raden Saleh Foundation to be discontinued. A quick change took place thereafter, through a decree of the Supreme War ruler on 12 June 1962 signed by President Sukarno in the State Gazette No: 25/1962 Prohibiting and dissolving the foundation and the Organization of formation Colonial, ranging from the Loge Agung Indonesia to the Raden Saleh Foundation. Since then, the building complex which is located in Jalan Merdeka Timur 14 Jakarta belongs to the Department of Basic and Cultural education, then became the headquarters of the Indonesian Student Action Union (KAMI) and the action Union of Indonesian Youth and students (KAPPI) until the end of the old order.

The establishment of GNI after the independence era experienced various obstacles with various tidal policies that set the government related. In 1985, when prof Dr.Fuad hassan be appointed as minister of education and culture, replace prof.Dr.Nugroho Notosusanto, the establishment of GNI a priority for the program. The colonial building at Jalan Merdeka Timur 14, began to be renovated and was used as an art exhibition.
hall which became known as the Art Exhibition building of Kemendikbud or known GPSR Kemendikbud. On 23 February 1987 GPSR Kemendikbud was inaugurated by the Minister of Education and Culture Fuad Hassan. In 1993 the Discourse of development of the National Gallery of Indonesia again rolled out and the role of Edi Sedyawati as Dirjend culture is very large, because through persistence and high commitment realization of the establishment of GNI can be realized. In line with the struggle of Edi Sedyawati in realizing Indonesia’s delayed gallery of Nasionl, in 1995 there was a political event in the country, namely Indonesia as the host of the International conference activities of Non-aligned movements. Part of events held the Non-Block movement, contemporary fine art exhibition that was inaugurated by President Suharto. The Momentum is well utilized to remind all parties of the importance of the existence of National Gallery of Indonesia for a nation. Initial idea of Non-block movement exhibition, 28 April to 30 June 1995 in Jakarta, according to AD Pirous, originated from Edi Sedywati mentioned at meeting art consortium.

Through various efforts and struggle then the approval of Coordinating Minister for Development Supervision of state apparatus utilization in the letter No. 34/MK. WASPAN4/1998 dated 30 April 1998 signed by Sapta Nirwandar, then made decree of the Minister of Education and Culture No 099a/0/1998, stipulated in Jakarta 8 May 1998. Then on 8 May 1999, the National Gallery of Indonesia was inaugurated by the Minister of Education and Culture, Prof. Dr. Juwono Sudarsono. The National Gallery of Indonesia building was designated as a national BCB by the Minister of Culture and Tourism through the Minister of DECREE no PM. 13/PW. 007/MKP/05 dated 25 April 2005.

One of the mission of GNI is to organize the works of fine art exhibitions as part of an appreciation and public education program. Broadly, GNI has 3 (three) types of exhibitions, namely, permanent exhibition, temporary exhibition and traveling exhibition. One of the temporary exhibitions inoted since 2001 is the art exhibition of the archipelago (Pameran Seni Rupa Nusantara), during the leadership of Wati Moerany, and curator Mamanoor. Art exhibition selection of Nusantara, with consideration of this exhibition is very important in giving room appreciation, for artists outside Java and Bali. By giving the space of appreciation to the artists of Nusantara, it can be mapped the strength of art Nusantara in the era of the 2000 and the 2010 ‘s. Efforts to build the identity of Nusantara Arts was initiated by the Jakarta Arts Council (DKJ) in Taman Ismail Marzuki, in the era 1970-An, through the events of the great art paintings of Indonesia (PBSLI) and initially held regularly every year. The exhibition was appreciated and positive feedback from the painters, so that it became the exhibition event that was anticipated. The DKJ
also gives awards to the best work through jury selection consisting of professional painters and DKJ Formators Council.

In line with the passing of time, direction and concept of PBSLI in TIM underwent a change, beginning with the constraints of budget so that the exhibition was stopped, then finally changed to the event Biennale Jakarta Fine Arts. Spirit Bienalle refers to the dynamics of contemporary fine Arts in several countries, where conceptual works are a priority. The chance of regional artists to display the best work is also increasingly fading. GNI's presence in the year 1999, as if again took the role, by giving the opportunity and space of creativity to the Indonesian young artists, both from Java, Bali, West Indonesia and East Indonesia. The art exhibition of Nusantara is prioritized to young artists of the region for the opportunity to appear at the national level. From 2001 to 2018, GNI has been organizing an art exhibition of Nusantara in 8 (eight) exhibitions.

Initially, the art exhibition of Nusantara is held annually, but with various considerations including program priorities and budget allocation, since the year 2009 art exhibition of Nusantara Arts was decided to be held two years. 1st Fine Arts Exhibition (2001) with Friends of Modern Art, Nusantara Arts exhibition 2nd (2002), theme "Idealoka Art of Nusantara", 3rd art Exhibition of Nusantara, (2005), theme "Are we different?", the exhibition arts of Nusantara, (2009), "Judging The Roots" theme, 5th art Exhibition of Nusantara, (2011), "Imaji Ornament", art exhibition of Nusantara, 6th (2013), "Meta Amuk", the 7th art Exhibition of Nusantara Arts, (2015), "Art Chipelago", art exhibition of the 8th archipelago, (2017), "Rest Area". In this study the authors will examine the art exhibition events held from 2001 to 2017, ranging from the related ministry policy, National Gallery of Indonesia, curatorial concept and artist ideology. As an indicator amplifier in reviewing the concept of multiculturalism on the events of this exhibition, the authors will identify the works exhibited, in several approaches: ideological artists, the selection of themes and aesthetics. Works that have potential local wisdom will be an emphasis on the study of the work.

The exhibited works are attributed to the theme of the curator team, which is associated with the spirit “kensusantaraan”. Most of the works exhibited are two-dimensional work especially painting on canvas and paper. identify works based on several aspects: the aspect of local wisdom, the social-political (environment, identity, politics, ideology, human rights, social criticism, Human Interest) and personal aspects (Spiritual, psychological, aesthetic discourse, Love, Death) and cultural aspects of Urban. As part of the study material, the author selects 5 pieces of painting by considering the aspect of the representation of the province, ideological artist, theme of work and aesthetics. Namely
Ignatius Dicky Takndare (Papua), Subandi Giyanto (Yogyakarta), Kadek Jefri Wibowo, (Bali), Agustan (South Sulawesi), Andis Pasaribu (North Sumatra),

Figure 2: Ignatius Dicky Takndare (Papua),  
"Ana Ye Ana", Oil on Canvas, 120 x 90 cm, 2016  
Source: GNI Library Documentation

Ignatius Dicky Takndare, born in Sentani, Papua, on June 6, 1988. As an artist Ignatius Dicky has a concern for humanitarian issues on hometown, Papua.

This work has a deep philosopi meaning in the context of the understanding of "mother" in the Macrocosm and microcosm, as revealed Ignatius Dicky, the mother figure in this work is a metaphor of Papua, his face that holds and the sick. The skin wrinkles that are increasingly and the chest that mongering as well as the Noken is indispensable is a picture of Papua land. Mothers are not merely representing the land but the unending children of the Papuan man are taken in grief.

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This painting show the figure of a middle-aged Papuan woman, no clothes only using the headgear of a cloth and noken. The facial expressions look flat without a smile, both hands are lifted like praying. When the arms were clearly visible all the left hand fingers were cut off, indicating that the woman had lost some family members. The tradition of the finger cut is the social reality that is still carried out today, especially in some areas in the land of Papua.

![Image of a horse](image.png)

**Figure 3:** Subandi Giyanto Diamku Kudaku, Acrylic, Gold Prada on Canvas 120 x 100 cm, 2017 Source: GNI Library Documentation

Subandi Giyanto, born in Bantul, June 22, 1958. He is a painter who consistently raises wayang tradition as an idea of work. The work of “Diamku Kudaku”, inspired by the existence of a very famous wayang beber in the past. Playing Wayang beber is different from wayang kulit, where the puppeteer tells stories from puppets and puppet characters through rolls of paper containing scene after scene. The tradition of the wayang beber is now extinct because it is no longer visible in some parts of Java. This painting emphasizes the spirit of wayang beber Wonosari which is described in a very simple, not as complex as a puppet pacitan. Horses are animals that are very energetic, strong, brave and run fast especially when competing in horse racing, all strength is demonstrated. These conditions if associated with the conditions of Indonesian as if there are similarities. Various social and political affairs in the country made the condition of the nation less comfortable and peaceful, because there were fights, violence and hurting each other. Through the selection of wayang beber wonosari ornament which is simple, naive, calm, but has a firm outline, it is hoped that this nation can withstand emotions and turmoil. Through the work of Diamku Kudaku, the artist wants to say that
even though this nation is in the midst of severe problems, it must remain calm to face it, and remain as optimistic as the gaze of a horse’s eyes pointing forward.

Figure 4: Kadek Jefri Wibowo (Bali) Tak Lekang oleh Waktu (acrylic on canvas, 160 x 200 cm, 2016) Source: GNI Library Documentation

Kadek Jefri Wibowo, born in Tabanan, Bali. January 15, 1993. This work was inspired by the well-preserved values of the Balinese-Hindu tradition, the Ngaben Ceremony. Ngaben is part of a Hindu-Balinese religious ritual, aimed at ancestors. The Ngaben ceremony has been going on since long ago, which is believed to be from the purification process for people who have died. This painting depicts how a group of young men wearing t-shirts are carrying “bade”, with the spirit of mutual cooperation and close family. In the midst of an era of globalization where various advances in science, technology and communication are so rapid, but do not shake the principles of the younger generation in Bali in preserving the values of ancestral traditions. Even if there is a shift in value, it is considered not too significant, namely the use of busansa t-shirts, but not traditional clothes. The use of t-shirts used by the younger generation is a representation of the development of civilization. Becoming together and the spirit of multicultural is the message and values that the artists want to convey in this work.

Augustan, South Sulawesi, 03 March 1986. One of the strong roots traditions in Sulawesi is the use of sarongs, which are used in various formal and unofficial activities, such as working in fields, rice fields, cooking, eating, sleeping, praying until intimate. The sarong tradition is characteristic of Agustan painting, especially how the Celebes people “glorify” the staying guests by providing 3-4 strands of casing. As a form of
respect for the guest staying, the homeowner will provide several sarongs, between 3 and 4 holsters. Each holster has a different function, namely for prayer, then to sleep and one for bathing, even one holster is also provided for the guest who is an Instri husband partner if it will be a husband wife relationship. The casing in this painting has a symbolic meaning of the form of appreciation and respect to the guest, the form of face that deliberately not painted but allowed to be “empty” is a symbol that through the casing difference social strata can be eliminated. Through the holster is expected to create dialogue and constructive cultural communication as one characteristic of Indonesian society in general, and the community of South Sulawesi in particular.

Artist Andis Rivai Pasaribu, born Siborong-Borong, North Sumatra, September 5, 1987. Completed his education at the Art Institute of Indonesia, Yogyakarta. Andis has a concentration on Batak Toba tradition, especially sculpture and sculptural art that is hundreds of years old. Through tradition statues can be learned various symbolic meanings about the balance in the life and power of the universe. Some of Philosophis’s values to this date are considered to be relevant and contextual, especially as a contemplative and introspective form of facing various problems. Departing from this concern, the works of Andis Pasasribu were widely inspired by the Batak Toba tradition,
but are interpreted and interpreted again in a contemporary context. This painting depicts Lake Toba as a flagship tourist destination, started experiencing environmental damage, brown stone dune on this painting is a symbol of the arbitrary attitude of developers who do not think long for Sustainability of the universe. While the figure of the "human statue" on horseback, the Lake Toba and the wilderness, is symbolic of the savior of the environment. The human statue of a horse rider is a mythology in Batak, which can be found on a war tool called Piso or sword.

Reviewing the themes of local wisdom that is always present at every time of organizing the Nusantara exhibition, showing concern in lifting social issues of culture. The values of tradition that became the source of the inspiration of artists, is reinterpreted by the artist in the context of the contemporary to criticize the situation and condition that occurred. Recalling the wealth of Indonesian traditions of the nation both Tanjibe and WWII, such as Wayang Beber, ancient Balinese script, traditional War tool Batak land Ngining, tradition cut fingers, traditions Musayawarah, is part of the effort to treat Multiculturalism. The various values of tradition presented by the artist are very diverse representing various provinces in Indonesia, starting from the tip of Sumatra to Papua, is a reflection of the spirit of multiculturalism. Observing some artworks from the art exhibition of Nusantara, which is very critical in addressing the social dynamics of society.
through the selection of traditional Artfek-artifacts, the opinion of Lombard, about the image of Nusantara archipelago can be studied. Reset, Lombard says:

“Image of Nusantara archipelago still often is the image of exoticism. The dense forest, the rhythm of the dancers, the terraced rice terraces terraced the stunning "Mooi Indie", as the islands mentioned in the colonial period still remain. The main characteristics of Nusantara are the fact that the area was once conjugised with modern civilization, Western civilization”. (Lombard, Denys. Nusa Jawa: Silang Budaya Bagian I: Batas-Batas Pembaratan. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008: 44)

The “Kenusantaraan” image is seen at the exhibition at GNI, precisely not emphasize the image of exoticism, such as natural scenery, rivers, mountains are beautiful, but more to how the artist's concern about global issues that occur today. Raising the spirit of the state, at the art exhibition of Nusantara, opens a greater chance of the faith of all Indonesia will be the importance of appreciating and local culture in the context of contemporary. The tesrebut thing is in line with, Tod Jones, who says:

“Cultural policies in Indonesia have the potential of local traditions that are considered in the face of economic and cultural openness. Indonesia’s cultural policy has largely been a “localist” – focused on preserving the authenticity of Indonesian culture through tightly controlled interactions with power from the outside. This narrow focus has created tension in the manner in which culture is disirculated and consumed in Indonesia through improved integration with international market”. (Jones, Tod. (2015:321). Kebudayaan dan Kekuasaan di Indonesia : Kebijakan Budaya Selama Abad ke-20 Hingga Era Reformasi. Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor)

In other views, the art exhibition of Nusantara is very important in the context of lifting tradition values that depart from the individual consciousness of artists, such as the expressed Agustan, South Sulawesi painters:

"Exhibition events involving artists outside the island of Java and Bali can foster a spirit of regional artists competition. Without any healthy competition, it is impossible to produce fine artwork, because there is no barometer or the indicator. With the keiutsertaan of local artists, ideas and creativity that is rooted in the values of Indonesian tradition can be performed at the national, regional to international level. There is the importance of institutions such as the National Gallery of Indonesia to give space of creativity and appreciation
Meanwhile, Surya Dharma, a painter from Kalimantan, said that the art exhibition of Nusantara opens the network with other artists outside Kalimantan. It is very positive because it occurs and the learning process so that each other can know the potential of the work presented, but also certainly try to understand the cultural potential of the artist Nusantara.

2. Conclusion

The role of National Gallery of Indonesia as a National Institute of Cultural Institutions is very strategic, through the policy of art Pameran Seni Rupa Nusantara give an opportunity to artists all over the archipelago to get the same opportunity with the artist in Java and Bali. The role of the head of National Gallery of Indonesia, Watie Moerany and the curator Mamanooor is very important, in the form of the art exhibition Nusantara era of 2000’s. This exhibition can be said to be the revival of the art of Nusantara and the revival of multiculturalism ever initiated by the Jakarta Arts Council in the 1970-era.

Through the selection of the local themes of the artists, both the tanjible (wayang, traditional sculpture, regional fashion, traditional house, folk games) and intanjible (such as customs, religious ceremonies, values) can be kept The spirit of multicutalism that begins to fade amid the era of globalization. The selection of traditional objects and artifacts from the artists in the works has a symbolic meaning, associated with the current social culture dynamics, such as environmental damage issues, political competition, urban culture and the breakup of Nation.

The art exhibition of Nusantara can be said as the laboratory of artist Nusantara, because through the involvement of the artists in the exhibition has been born professional artists become part of the history of the development of contemporary art history Indonesian.

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