

## PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF ARTS EDUCATION

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### Abstract

Philosophy of art or often called “aesthetics”, since ancient times until the Modern century, even Contemporary in studying art from a philosophical point of view, the ratio is oftendominant. Some philosophers even argue that art does not belong solely to taste, but also to theratio. This shows that art is truly human. It was Descartes who said, “cogito ergo sum”: Kant, “critique der urteriskraft”: Langer, “symbolic logic”. All of them point out that methodical skepticism establishes a balance of the rational and the empirical in a level of consciousness that includes the creation of symbolic forms and human feelings in order to create art. Philosophy and art are creative communication, but their means and ends are different. Philosophy is: the search for truth, while art is more about creation and enjoying value. Even if art uses language as in literature, this use is not the same in philosophy. The purpose of art is to evoke aesthetic emotions, while in philosophy, language is a tool to speak the truth. Through the philosophy of art, the understanding of art will be richer. Many things can be questioned. However, the question as a challenge is that philosophy of art is not just art history or music history. When we struggle with the axiology of art, our minds are challenged with the question “What about the epistemology of art” Is it possible?” Looking at the premises as stated, we can conclude that the existence of a philosophy of art is something legitimate; philosophical thoughts about art are a counterpoint and at the same time so that art does not develop naively.

### Introduction

Contextualization of Philosophy In essence, man is a philosopher. In other words, as Aristotle said, man must philosophize (Homer and Hunt, 1982: 4). This statement shows two main things in human life. First, there is a recognition of the human ability to philosophize. Philosophy is a human characteristic. Second, all problems can be philosophized. Philosophy, with its special methods, can be used as a knife to analyze experience. Thus, it is legitimate to question the beauty of art in general or music in particular in terms of philosophy. The philosopher is one who is content to be restless, because he does not take for granted the things that go on around him. He observes them, he is not simply satisfied with observing the phenomena that appear to his five senses, but he is driven by a thirst for knowledge to investigate these phenomena.

In a sense, for philosophers, philosophizing is a calling. This was

emphasized by Socrates who lived more than two thousand years ago (he is known as the “Father of Philosophy of Art/Beauty”). He said “A life that is not contested is not worth living” (Homer, 1982: 1). Philosophers with philosophical methods challenge life. This philosophical call, in the context of the philosophy of art, demands willingness, openness, and never a priori prejudice.

This means that the issue of art (dance) can be discussed from the angle of any discipline. Dance as a work of art must be seen as human culture. If you look for a red thread that is the result of culture, of course there is no culture that is imagined without aesthetic forms. When we talk about the term aesthetics, which is intended as a philosophy of art, this is an antique and unique thing, as beautiful as the history of human thought, and as unique as the problems it contains.

### Finding and Discussion

According to the existence of art from a philosophical point of view, we can look to several philosophers. Patience and cooperation with other sciences, is a model to achieve philosophical understanding. not infrequently some opinions of philosophers about art contradict each other. This is often confusing. Where is the counterpoint to philosophical thought and where is the counterpoint, so that it can give birth to new interpretations in the form of reflective thought, emerges slowly.

As Hegel said, "It is only late at night that the space spiked by Minerva seeks air". Philosophy as we see it in Greek times, in the Middle Ages in Modern and Contemporary times, has always been contextual. Plato (428 - 348 BC) divided the world into two: the two true ideas and the apparent world (the physical world). This view was continued by Aristotle (384-322 BC) although the point of approach was different. During the Patristic and Scholastic periods, Christianity played a major role. So their philosophy was linked to Christianity.

In Modern times, the spirit of science has progressed. The contemporary era saw: Phenomenology, and personalism. Philosophical reflective emphasis is given to the unique, free, expressive, and personal human being. When it comes to the philosophy of art, symbols need attention to preserve the "mystery" of human experience. Humans are not merely human beings of science, but humans who are aware of the environment and are not confined by scientific formulations that pretend to be so certain and convincing (Susantina, 1996: 4).

Philosophy of art, with its associations among philosophers of art, speaks of ideas, meaning, experience, intuition, all of which point to the symbolic nature of art. One way to

understand the philosophy of art is to trace the thoughts of philosophers. In this paper, not all philosophers can be featured. This paper only tries to put forward some philosophers who are considered representative of their era. For this reason, there is still a wider opportunity for those who are interested in researching further. Philosophy as a form of reflective thinking requires reflective thinking.

Unsatisfied with the basic explanations provided by the first intuition, thought seeks to construct its entire working process on the basis of thought. The oldest thoughts about art were expressed by Plato in the early 4th century BC, and Aristotle in the mid 4th century BC. In reality, the issue of art has become one of the preoccupations in the world of philosophy. Plato emphasized art as the beauty of intuition and contemplation.

In the concept of philosophy, Plato gave birth to the theory of Mimesis which sees the material world only as a shadow of the real world that exists above, namely the realm of ideas that are purely spiritual" (Plato, 1955: 138). Through the theory of Mimesis, Plato argues that: an artist is a second-class plagiarist, because he plagiarizes from a copy. Or a work of art is an imitation of an imitation (mimesis of mimesis). For Plato, music is a good work of art. Dance has an absolute position in government, because it is able to influence the moral and political fields. However, artists do not have a place in Plato's heart, because the position of artists is seen as lower than the position of a statesman.

Statesmen are able to weigh, analyze, and direct society based on ideas of goodness, justice, courage, and ideas of beauty. Meanwhile, artists only imitate the beauty that exists in this world. This is Plato's thesis that art is only an imitation of imitation. As a result of this imitation there are many changes from the original: Plato

in his dialogue entitled *Symposium*, said that a writer, and an artist is able to express with beauty because the artist is able to ecstasy into the realm of ideas, to see the real situation.

Aristotle, in some ways differed from his teacher, Plato. However, Aristotle's philosophy is a systematic arrangement of Plato's perceptions. According to him, art is indeed an imitation of nature, but it is actually from outside nature. Imitation of art brings goodness. The character of art becomes the task of philosophy to achieve perfect harmony. For Aristotle, musical harmony is a mixture of contradictory but unified essences with a certain ratio.

The elements in dance consist of: movement, music, floor patterns, dynamics, makeup, costumes, lighting and property can all be returned to harmony, beauty (aesthetics). This is not surprising, because dance cannot be alone, in its performance. In the perception of art, there are contrasting views between Plato and Aristotle. An artist, according to Aristotle, must think logically and psychologically.

Dance works are related, connected by threads of logic. However, this does not mean that an artist cannot include the impossible or even the irrational. Plausible impossibilities can be better than things that may not make sense. Aristotle wisely stood on the symbolism of dance beauty. He questioned: what is the reason why the movements in dance music are united in accordance with the moods of human feelings? Psychologically, Aristotle considered that dance movements are the language of the human body that expresses the inner atmosphere and special energy, from the movements of the artist's feelings.

In motion as the main medium in dance which is emphasized by other dance elements so that it is able to accommodate the experience of the soul, driven by

inspiration and then accepted by the viewer / observer / audience as an animated dance work of art. In the Middle Ages, we recognize a philosopher of the Dominican order, Thomas Aquinas (1225 - 1274). Many of Aquinas' works are more inclined to theological thought than to art-world thought. His main work is entitled *Summa Theologia* (Overview of Theology). (K. Bertens, 1990: 35). In terms of literature, this work is more closely related to Christian literature. In terms of philosophy, the work is important because of its comments on Aristotle's works.

Thomas Aquinas worked all the sources of inspiration into a synthesis that is truly admirable with the approach of philosophical and theological traditions. The noteworthy philosophical thoughts of Thomas Aquinas are: creation, the knowledge of God, Hilemorfeism (matter and form), and man. Borrowing these thoughts from Thomas Aquinas, it seems that the creation of artworks can be done with religious themes, according to the spirit of the Middle Ages.

To determine the end of the Middle Ages is not easy. But it can be said that the Middle Ages at least ended with the Renaissance in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In all cultural fields, the Renaissance era again deified Greek and Roman culture. In the field of literary arts, it gave birth to the era of Humanism; a movement that sought Humanist inspiration (Sunarto, 2000: 40-41). While in the field of fine arts, the Renaissance produced a painter, thinker, and architect named Michelangelo (1475 - 1565), in addition to Leonardo da Vinci (1452 - 1519). John Kepler (1571-1630), Galileo Galilei (1564-1642). This Renaissance era showed the light of freedom of expression.

In the field of philosophy, this era was also marked by the birth of the Modern era (17th - 19th centuries). Rene Descartes

(1596 - 1650), and Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804) can be mentioned as modern philosophers. In general, it can be stated that the main ideals of Descartes are: wanting to achieve truth by using only reason. For Descartes, the most important thing is to carry out the activities of reason as well as possible in order to obtain satisfactory knowledge. The main work of reason that he refers to is intuition and deduction (Copleston, 1958: 75). He defines intuition as a conception that arises from the illumination of reason alone without doubt.

That is, intuition comes from purely intellectual activity. While deduction is all the formulations that need to be made from facts that are known with certainty. As a philosopher of rationalism he is also often called the "Father of Modern Philosophy" (Sutrisno and Hardiman, 1992: 55-61). For him there is one thing that cannot be doubted, namely that "I doubt". In doubt I think, and because I think, I exist (*Cogito Ergo Sum*). Meaning: Indeed, what I think may be a delusion, but that I think is not a delusion (Sutrisna and Hardiman, 1992: 56-57).

Borrowing Descartes' way of working, most people rarely think that the freedom of art (dance) is no longer only through the exercise of body movements in achieving the expected beauty, and not only beautiful movements, but also contains values (symbolic meaning) that a dance artist wants to convey. For this reason, it seems necessary to retrace the thoughts of ethnochoreology towards the development of dance works. With the birth of the Modern era, which featured a revolution of thought and a breakthrough in the field of cultural values, it was able to influence the field of dance. In a period almost coinciding with the classical and modern eras, we remember a period in the world of dance called "Jaman Barok" (Sunarto, July 1997: 214-215). Here the

influence of rationalism can be examined in more depth.

Even Descartes in his book *Compendium Musicue* (1618) attempted to reveal some of the influences of rationalism and methodical skepticism in the spirit of music (Weiss and Taruskin, 1984: 189). From the era of Rationalism went the era of Criticism with the philosopher Immanuel Kant. Ideas emerged due to clashes arising from the thoughts of previous philosophers (Rationalism, Empiricism).

Kant's philosophy is called *Kritisne* philosophy, because three of his major works are called "criticism", namely: *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft* (Critique of Pure Reason), *Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft* (Critique of Practical Reason), and *Kritik der Urteilkraft* (Critique of Reason). Kant with his philosophy intends to expose the objective nature of the world and science. In order for this to happen, one must avoid dualism, i.e. not leaning towards rationalism and empiricism.

What is meant by beauty in the philosophy of art is that it is intrinsically linked to the senses. But is beauty something that is exclusively a sensory activity? If beauty is only a matter of the senses, it is necessary to ask whether it can be said to be human knowledge? Beauty that is purely sensory is something odd for humans. Man has intellect in him. He is able to overcome the singular things captured by the senses.

In every human activity, including sensory activities, reason plays a role. Kant's major work that will be mentioned here is *Kritik der Urteilkraft* (Critique of Reason). It is hoped that from this work we can learn to understand the ideas it contains, then as material for reflection when artists want to work.

Here Kant is actually dualistic in his critical philosophy. This is because the

methods used by sensing and reason are seen as two different sources of knowledge that are only superficially suspected, that they may have the same roots. In his *Critique of Reason*, Kant attempts to reconcile this difference. His reconciliation is found in a “reflecting or reconsidering faculty of judgment”. Reason has the power to make judgments, by which it will subordinate particulars to generalities.

But there is still another desire to consider by reflecting or reviewing to find the general in particular phenomena. Kant does not use deduction, but the other way around. This method of induction is useful for problems that connect theoretical knowledge with practical ratios. When Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-1762) coined the term “aesthetics,” he meant “philosophy of art,” according to which the entire array of (empirical) experience has a detailed and unified structure in art (Bagus, 1991).

It is in this same vein that Kant traces in his philosophy of art the style of this empiricist approach also in the discussion of beauty and works of art during the modern era. In relation to the idea of creation, the creative process, some English philosophers were fond of talking about the human capacity for imagination. For example, Francis Bacon (1561 - 1626), Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679), and John Locke (1632 - 1704). Meanwhile, David Hume (1711 - 1776) discussed works of art by basing himself on ideas (association of ideas) as the root of the creative power of beauty. The ideas of art creation are not only dominated by rationalism, empiricism, or ratio-empirical reasoning power, but also by the subject's feelings, emotions, and tastes that are more dominant.

Such views were apparent in the widely influential Romantic school. One of the most famous figures of this era was

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832). He emphasized the importance of the creator's personal emotions. In France, the Romantics exaggerated the slogan “L'art pour l'art” (art for art's sake). With regard to this Romantic era within the circle of philosophers in the field of art, among others: Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). Schopenhauer argued: “Music is thus by no means like the other arts, the copy of the ideas, but the copy of the will itself, whose objectivity the ideas are” (Carroll, 1954: 228).

He questions why the influence of music is so great that there is even a kind of penetration of the personal self compared to other arts (dance, for example) which are only shadows of speech. However, dance is able to express more than just feelings and speech. Dance is influential because Schopenhauer's philosophy is pessimistic. According to him, there are two ways humans can escape the pressures of life. First through dance works and also music as a “stop” of penetration. Second through self-denial (askese). Friedrich Nietzsche, this pessimistic philosopher in his works is much influenced by Schopenhauer.

Particularly in his perspective on dance works, he argues that dance is able to provide meaning for human life. In one of his writings entitled *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Dance* (1872) (The birth of tragedy from dance) contains a theory about the origin of the dance drama *Roro Jonggrang* for example or in the colossal dance drama *Baratha Yudha War* and so on. For Nietzsche, works of art can be said to be of quality due to the conflicting but mutually pervasive conceptions between two tendencies.

As a driving motivation to create, one must have quite a lot of lust. The lust for spiritual life is also not denied. It is these passions that manifest themselves as the

spirit of creation. A well-known 19th-20th century philosopher in the field of art is Susanne K. Langer (1895-19...). The field of art is not unfamiliar to her. To discuss the idea of creating art, in this case dance, she judged it from the philosophy of art in general. Art expression, according to her, is the same but the form of expression is different. This is to reinforce that it is impossible to approach the understanding of art as a whole. Langer's most famous work is *Philosophy in a New Key* (1942).

In this book he put forward his theory which he named "symbol theory", hence he defined art as the creation of symbolic forms of human feeling. As a symbolic form, art is the universalization of experience. Artists in creating their works of art, of course, begin with contemplation of the results of expressive symbolization. Specifically in the field of dance, Langer argues that dance is not the most universal, highest, and most expressive art. For what reason does she think so? This question is a challenge to further examine her views on art.

In dance, movement is the main medium in this dance work we have not been able to achieve the highest goal. For Langer, the highest goal that can reveal the work of art must be through symbolization. In *Problem of Art* (1957), Langer explains the principle of art formation by comparing it with the principle of symbol formation in science. Symbol formation is abstract and does not go through gradual generalization.

Abstraction in art is a total abstraction, because art is creative rather than constructive (arrangement). Langer explicitly states that art is the creation of symbolic forms of human feeling. An expressive philosopher who denies the existence of Geist and puts emphasis on symbolization is Langer. In his book that he once "vowed" that man is nothing but a chemical structure that has a uniquely

human need, namely symbolization, symbolic formation (Langer, 1942: 50).

As a symbolic form, art has undergone a transformation, which is the universalization of experience. Symbols are an essential act of the "mind". In a work of art, the artist does not only translate certain experiences in the work of art, the artist does not only translate certain experiences in the work of art. Here we can ask the question, why is this so? Because, if art is a translation of the artist's experience, art is then the content of one's own experience directly expressed from what is experienced.

By symbolic form, it is meant that the artist in creating the artwork has to contemplate and feel the experience that the artist in creating the artwork has to contemplate and feel the direct experience, and transfer it into a universal (general) experience that can be digested by others. So according to Langer, symbolic forms do not lead to direct symptoms, but to experiences that have been symbolized. For this reason, works of art are created as a result of symbolic expression, and this activity of expression of ideas is revealed quite prominently in Langer's writings (Langer, 1942: 51).

In addition to the philosophers who have been mentioned, it seems that there are still many philosophers who talk about the philosophy of art, aesthetics in particular and art in general. They include: Paul Ricoeur (1913- ), Emmanuel Levinas (1906-1995), Michael Foucault (1926-1984), and Jacques Derrida (1930- ). This is a challenge for us as well as a counterpoint when artists want to create. Perhaps the ideas of creation can be inspired by the workings of philosophers who sometimes disturb, nauseate, but clarify our ratios, empirics, feelings, and emotions.

Philosophical reflections An excursion into the ideas and works of

philosophers is not as easy as one might think when the question is asked: "What is the relevance of philosophy and art? And when sharpened, it leads to the question: "What is the relationship between philosophy and the life of an artist? While we hear discussions, dialogues that sharpen and question the existence of philosophy in a university, such a reality, has not been able to open the veil of ignorance, even ignorance of the art community, for what exactly we care about philosophy.

Art is a process of creation, taste, and creativity. Just like science and technology. Art would not exist if humans were not gifted with creative power. What distinguishes the creative process between art and science and technology is that artistic creativity is strongly influenced by feeling (feeling emotion) to such an extent that the ratio, which is essentially present in every human being, sometimes has less place for artists. This does not mean that artists never work rationally.

Philosophy of art or often called "aesthetics", since ancient times until the Modern century, even Contemporary in studying art from a philosophical point of view, the ratio is often dominant. Some philosophers even argue that art does not belong solely to taste, but also to the ratio. This shows that art is truly human. It was Descartes who said, "cogito ergo sum": Kant, "critique der urteriskraft": Langer, "symbolic logic". All of them point out that methodical skepticism establishes a balance of the rational and the empirical in a level of consciousness that includes the creation of symbolic forms and human feelings in order to create art.

## Conclusions

Philosophy and art are creative communication, but their means and ends are different. Philosophy is : the search for truth, while art is more about creation and

enjoying value. Even if art uses language as in literature, this use is not the same in philosophy. The purpose of art is to evoke aesthetic emotions, while in philosophy, language is a tool to speak the truth. Through the philosophy of art, the understanding of art will be richer. Many things can be questioned.

The question as a challenge, however, is that the philosophy of art is not just the history of dance and or the history of music. As we grapple with the axiology of art, our minds are challenged with the question "What about the epistemology of art" Is it possible?" Looking at the premises as stated, we can conclude that the existence of a philosophy of art is something legitimate; philosophical thoughts about art are a counterpoint and at the same time so that art does not develop naively.

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