

CHAPTER IV

KAWRUH JIWA AND POSTMODERN SOCIETY

A. Morality in Postmodern Society

Postmodern has skipped over rationality, positivism, universality, certainty, instrumentalism, and the other thing from modernism. It is also a desire to abandon the excessive need for myths, narratives, or knowledge. And it make world especially the world of art and philosophy are faced with a kind of 'uncertainty towards ' (indeterminacy), ' legal uncertainty ' and ' uncertainty value'. It seems like human have been being on a maze.

As if there is no legal limit, moral of rationality, aesthetics, and ethics, there is no boundary between the moral/immoral, rational/irrational, good/bad , the message / media , should / should not be , reality / fantasy , form / meaning . As if no message is conveyed, no more division or distinction between media, message and cause. In fact, according to Marshall McLuhan, ' media ' itself has become the message.¹

As some previous explanations, postmodernism is a discourse that shy away from the definition. Even how many people who have given some meaning to what is postmodernism, it still submit itself to the understanding of every individual who thought about it. Postmodern is often blamed as irresponsible culture, which allowed anything (anything goes!), There are no rules or legal certainty in there. Although this is as the impact of its positive goal to eliminate universalism and re-actualize a variety of alienated sciences by modernization with no justify them on being an absolute justification.

Postmodernism can be seen as a *relativist* trend. In this era, might as 'who or what is it good for?'² Every values are created by and are only relevant to particular circumstances (every own culture). There is no global agreement about what constitutes justice. It is mean that there is no reason to say that Western beliefs are must be followed by changed the other world view.

¹ Yasraf Amir Piliang, *Hiper-realitas Kebudayaan*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1996), p. 12

² Glenn ward, *teach yourself postmodernism*, (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1997), p.

There is no justification that one view more valid than other view. So it is with the western views. Postmodern in one side, it comes with its pluralism. It is become the ideal of shared standards in society. It seems to the difference celebration. But the question is what is the limitation of tolerance? some critics which often appear behind postmodernism ideas as the epistemology are when some arguments about attitude is always based on the truth. “How can be done, if all of the thing are open-ended and relative?”

Certainly, human can not blame postmodernism with all views. They also can not blame what has been brought by modernism, it give a huge impact to all over the world. Because after all, as Heidegger argues that human being are inhabits existence, they are participant in the Earth there will no doubt to be affected even it can be said to be able to "live " at every change of space and time, because they are not something that is created to always be the same, either base on the theological and humanist views. It will be suitable to do Glann statement on his books, “teach yourself postmodernism!”

Liotard’s declaration of ‘war on totality’ is a moral imperative. In her book *contingencies of values* (1998) the pragmatist thinker Barbara Herrnstein Smith argues that taking a relativist view does not remove your capacity for ethical decision making. She list your memory, imagination, conditioned loyalties, as factors that enable you to take moral action. And the difficulty is how to marry such values to respect for diversity. Some kinds of global agreement about the principal of social justice are desirable. Human have to position theirselves, between ‘absolutism’ and ‘anything goes’.³

B. The Teaching of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram as one of the mini narrative

Liotard rejects the single truth or what he calls as the meta narrative, and now there are only small narratives (mini narrative) which legitimize the practice of all kinds of knowledge.⁴ Included there some teachings which is brought by Ki Ageng Suryomentaram about the concept of self-actualization called *Kawruh Jiwa*.

³ *Ibid*, p. 200

⁴ Listiyanto Santoso, *Epistemologi Kiri 2nd* Pub. (Jogjakarta: Ar- Ruzz Media, 2012), p.

Postmodern society has related with the terms of relativism, it seems the rejection of certain universal forms. In this case, the uncertainty of ethic as one of the problems of humanity that exist in postmodern society, it means that there is no true moral principles generally, the accuracy of all moral principles are relative accommodated to the concerned or selection individual environment

However, a human community have guidelines (customs, morals, values) in their self actualization of their life. Basically they are make by each community appropriate with their respective environments, and some goals of each group to create a harmonious, calm, and ordered social relations.

Kawruh Jiwa is more accurately described as the science (it can be classified in human philosophy or psychology), because it has a basic material and a clear method, it has been presented systematically and logically, so that it can be used to analyze and solve the problem of daily life functionally.⁵ It did not rule out the problem of postmodern society,

Some extended concepts by Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are not intended as an absolute concept that must be followed. Nor they are as a form of totalitarianism reconstruction. His teachings can be classified as one of what has been called by Lyotard with a small narrative; those have a goal to establish a humane individual.

One of the keyword of postmodern according to Lyotard is to create some new ideas which is came from such minni narratives. There is no grandnarrative but some minni narrative from the series of local requirement. With heterogen rules to search for the diversity of such opinions to create some new ideas.

Javanese people, which is included as the background of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram thought, is not the only object of his thought, where they have to represent theirselves as what Ki Ageng Suryomentaram thought, but the Javanese particularly, and the other groups (tribes, nations, races and the others) who are still –very admiring on their culture- generally should be able

⁵ Afthonul Afif dkk, *Matahari dari Mataram*, (Depok: Kepik, 2012), p. 68

to "live" and open minded to new challenges. One of them is postmodernism. They teach themselves postmodernism.

C. Some Teaching of *Kawruh Jiwa* of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in Postmodern Society

1. *Mawas diri* or *Pengawikan Pribadi* (Self Introspection)

According to Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Pengawikan pribadi* or learning about the sense of the human self can be equated with the study of human and humanity. Because people are included in the part of the creature called a Human. Then when they learn about a sense of themselves and can understand it properly, they will understand the general people automatically.⁶

Pengawikan pribadi as a form of the desire control that tends to be relentless and always increas, with the understanding of "me" will make human have ability to know what should they do every time and space they are, and how to solve it, imply with the entry of postmodernism. It is not a rejection or an extreme cult choice. But they will be able to control their selves to face it base on their own evaluation.

Small narratives such as myths, fairy tales, and others which want to be appeared by postmodernism have born with the idea and purpose of each owners of the narrative. But many of their followers have taken it with blind imitation. It will not happen in people who already know about themselves, because they will make a decision or take a choice base on an understanding of what they face about, critically. Those values has been believed seriously, and it is not only base on guessing or "*pantas-pantasnya*".

2. *Semat, drajat, and kramat* toward The World of Simulation

In his book of *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, Jean Baudrillard has developed his concept of the 'signified simulation'. In Baudrillard's view, today society is the 'colonizer' of signs and the codes

⁶ Abdurrahman el-Ashi, *Makrifat Jawa Untuk Semua*, (Jakarta: PT Serambi Ilmu Semesta), 2011, p. 52

into almost every commodity, commodity change as a 'dispenser' signs and power (pleasure, status and symbol).⁷

The concept of human happiness or unhappiness is caused by fulfill or insatiable of their basic needs. The need will come to the human being relentlessly, then come the secondary needs which are derived from the own human mind to obtain momentary pleasure, status, and prestige in their community. Then human become the victims of the needs that he has made by their selves where it comes from what has been called as the desire (*karep*).

In the *wejangan* of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram mentioned that desire is very influential, especially in three areas that have been clearly defined: wealth (*semat*, a general trend towards material pleasures such as finding riches, enjoyment, and pleasure), public recognition (*drajat*, one's position in the social hierarchy to search for glory, pride, and virtue), and magical powers (*Kramat*, seeking power, trust to be respected and praised).⁸ The desire of those three things happen when human are simply controlled by their ego, pleasures for their selves, and do everything as they want. They tend to get rid of something that is unprofitable or fun for their selves, and look for something that can lead to comfort on their selves. It is humane.

As what has been said by Ki Ageng Suryomentaram about such problems of human or society which are influenced by *semat*, *drajat* and *kramat*, those are the basic of human actualization. It still happend in postmodern society. Moreover, it has been more complex than what Ki Ageng Suryomentaram mean at the past.

Jean Baudrillard names it with the world of simulation. Human are being on reality space where the diversity between the real world and fantasy, the real and imitation are very thin. Spaces which have no paid attention on such real categorizes, apparent, true, false, fantasy, reference,

⁷ Yasraf Amir Piliang, *Semiotika dan Hiperrealitas*, (Bandung: Matahari, 2012), p. 155

⁸ Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Falsafah Hidup Bahagia Jalan menuju Aktualisasi Diri* Vol. I, translated by Ki Oto Suastika and friend, (Jakarta: Grasindo), p. 4

representation, reality, image, production, reproduction. All of them has merged in sign.

Image is more interest than reality. Postmodern society have overboarded in mass media where it create the way-out meaning explosion in order to beat down the real reality when the object is not seen by its profit but from its meaning and symbol value. It is what has influence in *semat, drajat* and *kramat* now.

3. The Relevance of *Mulur Mungkret Ki Ageng Suryomentaram* and Desiring machine

According to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, in their book of “*Anti-Oedipus*”, 'desire' or 'passion' will never be fulfilled, it is always reproduced on higher forms by what is called as 'desiring machine' (used term to describe the reproduction of “deficiency sense' (lack) on their selves continuously). Once the desire has fulfilled, it will appear the higher desire and consider more perfect and more relentless. human have a desire of an object which is not due to the natural lack of the object, but it come from 'deficiency sense' that has been produced and reproduced from human.

As Deleuze and Guattari argues that Desiring machine is always be *different, something else*. There is no desire for the same thing, for something that is already owned. And the risk of this can sink into the controlled subject under their control sign, confusing or contradictory, that is contained in a series of different objects. The object of consumption that flow unfailling in high speed inside the arena of consumerism will never fulfill the need.⁹

Product, style, images that come and go, just create the interplay and contradictory jungle signs, and it also create an overlapping network of sign which has called by Lacan as 'schizophrenic'. Every time people

⁹ Yasraf Amir Piliang, *Hiper-realitas Kebudayaan*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1996), p. 106

consume the product, sign, or new image. those are the responses of the information/ questions/ appointments/ persuasion from that era.¹⁰

In the language of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, human need is always *mulur* (developed) and *mungskret* (shrink). Although the need has been fulfilled even it has satisfied, there will be other urgent demands that will follow. There are also moments where the human interest is not satisfied, but it is considered as does not urgent thing for their desires.

4. The Harmony of Ethic of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in Postmodern Society

One of the characteristic of modernism is the revival of Tribalism, it make society in committed groups by strong spirit of unity and spirit of unity in politic organization which has togetherness solidarity to face the outsiders, it is a mentality to favor his own tribe or group. Postmodernism has been rejected this ideology.

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram uphold the concept of harmony as his background as the Javanese people which has the concept of social harmony ethic which is interpreted into two principles, namely the principle of harmonious and respectful principle. Both of them have aim to establish a society in a state of harmony. Not only in the scope of his fellow Javanese, even the human sphere, but also it is between humans and the fellow human being, nature, and the Sacred.

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram taught and postmodernism are in one line, not only in their idea of the harmony, but also in the postmodern critique of the modern dualistic view which divides the whole reality into subject and object, which resulted in the excessive natural objectification and arbitrary natural depletion, it causes the ecological crisis.

5. *Manungsa Tanpa Tenger or Ukuran Kaping Sekawan* (Fourth Dimention) in Postmodern Society

Human life in the fourth dimention or the fourth dimension which is the highest stage of man that must be taken, it means that human life in the

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 106

line to sense. This stage is useful to understand the sense of the others when the human has been completely able to use the creativity, sense, and will (*cipta, rasa, and karsa*). Human have a sense of freedom.

Human life in the fourth dimension means to understand the own sense and the other sense. That those exist in human self sense. Life at this stage lead to the legal ethics or ethical guidelines which is, "who are looking for good without reassure the others (the neighbors), as well as round up on his own neck."¹¹ Human is on unhappiness when they see on the other suffer. Although it is based on self need of self fulfill desire to be a good people. Human realize that a good attitude will raise the dignity and selfishness attitude will degrade.

One of the themes that come from postmodern thinkers are, for the realization of health and sustainable society, than public life should reflect the religious values. This belief requires of preexisting beliefs that public policy should reflect some moral values, and that morality is ultimately rooted in a religious vision, this means a rejection of the modern assumption that morality is autonomous.¹²

So in postmodernism view, the concept of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, either it about harmony or *manungsa tanpa tenger, mawas diri, and mulur mungkret* can be a knowledge that qualify to be publicize, and apply in a postmodern society in order to create a harmonious and humane life. It is not as a reconstruction of an absolute concept for all mankind, but as the choice of the view of life, without alienating other knowledge. Some various individual or communities can embrace the unwarranted and parallel ideas.

101 ¹¹ Ki Fudyartanto, *Psikologi Kepribadian Timur*. (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2003), p.

¹² David Ray Griffin, *Visi- visi Postmodern (Spiritualitas dan masyarakat)*, translated by A. Gunawan Admiranto, (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kanisius, 2005), p. 38