

## **Piggy Bank Ceramic From Dinoyo-Malang East Java**

**Ponimin**

Department of Art and Design, State University of Malang,  
INDONESIA.

[pon\\_arts@yahoo.co.id](mailto:pon_arts@yahoo.co.id)

### **ABSTRACT**

Figurative ceramic produced by crafters in Dinoyo – Malang, East Java, is a public craft which has unique form, technique, and material. Ceramic form produced has harmonious meaning with the society's social culture element. The research discusses about: (1) What is the idea of piggy bank ceramic creation, (2) What is the meaning of piggy bank ceramic. Data collected from interview and observation. Analysis used is semiotic. Analysis result is about piggy bank ceramic creation which originated from Hindu religion influence, believed by Chinese society in Malang. The meaning which is believed by society is wealthy spirit and fertility.

**Keywords:** Ceramic, Local Culture, Semiotic

### **INTRODUCTION**

Figurative ceramic is an artwork described animal or human as its object. Ceramic craft in Craft Center of Dinoyo Malang East Java produced ceramic product which took living creatures as object. One of the most popular ceramic in 1970s is piggy bank.

Piggy bank ceramic product is created according to three aspects, they are: idea, shape, and technique. Those three aspects are influenced by the crafter's social culture. (a) Idea dug by crafter in creating artwork basically found from people's interest, including piggy bank which mostly demanded by people in their environment; (b) artwork design didn't change the object, but created with similarity with its object, such as head, body, or other body parts; and (c) ceramic making technique basically uses hand-shaping directly. So that idea and shape wanted has attached with crafter's skills. Technique which used hand as shaping tools need quite long time in creating artworks.

Observation data in ceramic craft center at Dinoyo shows the ceramic shape is closely related with crafter's collective awareness. The crafter creates ceramic in piggy bank shape, seen from social culture observation and backgrounds, reflected a local culture.

Crafter's social culture aspects show there's intrinsic and extrinsic influence. (a) Non-technical factor is intrinsic factor given influence to ceramic characteristic. Intrinsic factor is crafter's aesthetic experience. So the closeness between object and crafter possibly has close relations and (b) extrinsic factor is influence from outside the crafter. The influence is caused by technical training in developing design and technology factor. Those two factors made ceramic products in Dinoyo shows local wisdom value (Efendi, 2005: 5). Including piggy bank ceramic product.

Implementation of piggy bank ceramic crafter idea which expressed via burned clay, is an expression made according to visual elements based on object. Pig object which commonly consumed by Indo-Chinese (mixed ethnic between Chinese and local Indonesian) people has ethnical values. Some ceramic crafter in Dinoyo center made ceramic with natural object in their effort to build spirit. Various piggy bank produced in Dinoyo center is related with technique principles which created shape structure. Meaning contained sourced from

individual or collective culture (Kuntowijoyo, 1987: 5). Values in artwork implied shape and common understanding among people who supported it. Piggy bank ceramic is started from Indo-Chinese people's interest in Malang. At that time this piggy bank shape is not as popular as chicken shape. Because people who have interest to this piggy bank is limited

Umberto Eco (1974: 48) emphasize value came from art as aesthetic expression elements. The elements correlated with principles contained content or purpose. Those things could be found in ceramic Dinoyo ceramic.

Piggy bank ceramic closely related with people beliefs element, stored in cognition structure, symbolic system with meanings intertwined into other culture structure. Full characteristics of an artwork are shape and content (see Geertz, 1973 in Rohidi, 2000: 29). Symbolic structure forms understanding in selective way by crafter. Crafter's cognition is a reflection from environment in integrative way, related with aesthetic appreciation (Suparlan, 1987: 199).

Aesthetic of artwork, including piggy bank ceramic is understood in various expressions: beautiful, nice, gorgeous, nice, soft, dynamic, solid, sentimental, unique and complex. Sibbly and Hungerland (Rohidi, 2000: 29) understood aesthetical value of artwork which grew feelings which is able to be expressed by society. Aesthetic values of piggy bank ceramic in Dinoyo became focus which is studied in this research (1) How is the piggy bank ceramic creation idea, (2) what is the meaning implied in piggy bank ceramic. People aesthetic comprehension in art is not always the same; environment where the art group exists is not always the same. All groups who created ceramic artwork reflected each condition (Withnow, et al, 1984: 109-111). The existence of piggy bank ceramic which is supported by Indo-Chinese society through spiritual awareness. That's why, in empirical reality, pig-shaped piggy bank is not as popular as chicken-shaped piggy bank ceramic (Sutokoh, interview in May 3rd 2014).

Technical and aesthetical senses owed by each individual from Dinoyo ceramic center are various, whether burning technique, shape, and coloring. It because their different experience (Suparlan, 1985: 4). Difference appeared based on different experience and motivation created various ceramic shapes (Guntur, 2000: 15). It suggests that piggy bank ceramic exists by consumers' demand and crafter skill in manifesting shape.

## **METHOD**

Piggy bank ceramic discussion in Dinoyo ceramic center, especially tried to dig symbolical meanings. Approach used is semiotic. This discussion wanted to catch symbols meaning raised in aesthetic communication, includes sign sender and receiver aspects. Semiotic analysis according to Felix Vodicka understands the artwork dynamical structure with semiotical elements. Understanding figurative ceramic craft shouldn't ignore social cultural backgrounds around it and also placed fully figurative ceramic art system dynamics, since these two things are *interplay of forces* in ceramic craft art. 'Power which plays each other' which actually refer to an artwork entity. However, the dynamics became real by seeing the appearance of function sliding, meaning, shape, ornament, composition, and others which continuously happens.

In the contrary, Maria Susai Dahavamoni (1995: 30), quoting Levi-Strauss. Structure as connection which more or less fixed and essential between elements, parts, or patterns in full-parts which is organized and united. Structure is connection each other which is not directly experienced, even never been thought logical or causal, but understandable; a full organic which couldn't be analyzed into its elements, but it can be understood from its shaping

elements. Structure is reality arranged according to its meanings, but the meaning itself is also a part of reality or subject trying to understand it (Dahavamoni, 1995: 30).

These two sides seem opposite, since one considers it dynamic and fixed, but both views have keywords with disjointed meanings: dynamic and organic. Both words contain 'life' meanings. So, there will be movement in structure. That movement can be inside it, just like in pure aesthetic essence, can also be out of their formal structure. That out movement is able to show the history of structure formed elements, into its creator or society.

Structure always relates with backgrounds created it, understanding about history which creates structure (genetic of structure) into a necessity. Here is actually the core of genetic structuralism principle introduced by Lucien Goldmann (1967 in Elizabeth Burns and Tom Burns, 1973; see Amri, 1986).

History core to be found is what called by 'world view'. This 'world view' will be born in artwork aesthetic structure. Relations between 'world view' and structure called as sociology aesthetic according to Goldmann (1955 in Elizabeth Burns and Tom Burns, 1973; see Amri, 1986).

This term originally refers to Marxist ideology perspective—since Goldmann is actually one of the big figures from Marxist literature critic—and analysis done by Goldmann based on individual huge artwork. So, analysis by genetical structuralism approach in this research is a modification according to thought that both literature and ceramic figurative are art. What differs both are only media used. It also happens to semiotic analysis to artwork, which in the beginning are offered by figures such as: structural linguistic pioneer, F. de Saussure and philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (see Winfried Noth, 1995), is also developed by literature critic expert (see Jonathan Culler, 1981).

## **DISCUSSION**

Figurative ceramic in Dinoyo Ceramic Center is an evidence of local crafter creation. This center had already developed around 1920's and the skill transmission is done hereditary. In the beginning, ceramic making is driven by household needs. Around Dinoyo rocky area in ancient time is an agriculture area. People at that time needed household furniture to keep water and farm products. In addition of stove and also food and drinking utensils (interview with Ngadiono in March 12th, 2014).

### **Creation Idea**

Ceramic in Dinoyo in previously used as functional product. Ceramic in Dinoyo is used as household tool facilities. Along with the development of civilization in Malang, Ceramic in Dinoyo has become economy commodity, then known as commercial product

The idea of piggy bank making originally came from crafters. This idea is possible by people interest developed by living thought of Indo-Chinese people around Dinoyo region. In year 1920's to 1950's, piggy bank has meaning as savings, transformed meaning is persistency or perseverance. This philosophy is derived from Hinduism understanding. Pig is animal with strong appetite, that's why its body fat quickly. The animal's behavior, just like hard work and love to keep their result for potential needs in the future. Symbolization for pig as animal with persistence and perseverance attract people to buy the artwork. Savings, in addition of wealth in Chinese perspective, for Javanese, it also symbolizes persistence in doing business.

Piggy bank from Dinoyo center is an important culture product. It has relation with past, at least Hinduism relation which believed by some of Indo-Chinese people. As cultural product, ceramic can be viewed as idea, value, norm, and/or society behavior (Lury, 1998: 58).

Transformation from idea, value, norm, and other contexts into specific shape, it's a reflection of craft community and their consumers. Ceramic product is different with ceramic made from other ceramic center. The difference in product, decoration, working technology, meaning, and others. The difference between similar products seemed in their different shapes.

### **Production Technology**

Development of clay characters can be formed into various shapes figure ceramics. Clay which is used by crafter has characters which are easy to be shaped and becomes harder in heating process. Besides, the clay has character which made it slippery when exposed to water and tough when wet. Clay is a type of soil used by crafter; it has soft grain with diameter lower than 0.01 millimeters (Interview with Sutokoh, March 20th 2014).

Piggy bank from Dinoyo can be categorized in additional technique with less difficult process, the technique can be seen from materials mixtures, shaping technique, surface finishing technique, and firing process using continuous tunnel stove (Interview with Klemit, April 14th 2013).

### **Piggy Bank**

According to Jaspers, symbolism is referential value; one of them is past experience (Soedarso, 2006: 970). Artwork symbol has unique characteristic. Primitive society who creates their household furniture, in the beginning only took things spread in nature. Colorful decoration becomes parts which didn't found in other places Art with such characteristic, according to Cassier and Goethe is a true art (Sachri, 1989: 116).

Symbolical meaning of piggy bank from Dinoyo in contextual display shows content which reflected by its shape. Shape closely related with crafter attitude in presenting visual and working technology (Hidayat, 2003: 57). Art includes shape and content. (1) Shape has visible sensory, which is piggy bank ceramic, and (2) Reflection from visible shape. People or creator comprehension aspects have orientation in spirit which formed comprehension. Pig in Indo-Chinese society which embraces Hindu religion reflected wealthy spirit. This is a reflection of Indo-Chinese people persistence character which they had strong work ethic. They saved their hard work, expecting one day it can be used to increase family's wealth. Just like pig which always eats so they became fat. Fat is viewed as wealthy symbol.

According to Eugene Veron, piggy bank is not only seen from aspect of pleasing or not. But also value aspect inside it, which is work ethic spirit of persistence Indo-Chinese people. Piggy bank ceramic function presents local culture, which is symbol and effort to save money. So, ceramic is able to give possibility to person who demand it through its uniqueness (Soedarso, 2006: 129). Piggy bank has aspect which is able to raise happiness or joy. Joy and hope when they put some of their money which came from hardwork. People's mood made piggy bank is attractive for society. Not only for Indo-Chinese people. But also people in general. But in 1980's, Piggy bank is slowly disappeared. Piggy bank from ceramic which stood still is the chicken shaped-piggy bank. Chicken ceramic is more interesting for Javanese since it is considered as persistence and might. But saving ethic couldn't be developed. Javanese people who embraced Islam religion exchanged pig figure. It because the figure is prohibited to be consumed.

Tjetjep Rohendi Rohidi (2000: 80) stated, visual aesthetic appeared through shape, which is description of pig, wouldn't be the same with the meaning contained. It means that pig figure rejected by Javanese is associative perception; prohibition to consume pig is also related with keeping pig figure. The shape appeared is symbolization of meaning presented from shape.

Ceramic artwork symbol not only keep meaning in shape. Piggy bank ceramic shape as sign which is similar or same with signed object. Piggy bank ceramic is a symbol contained wealth, persistence, and perseverance in working meaning. The meaning gave spirit to people in arbitrary. Art meaning manifested in specific shape generally is presentational symbol, which is symbol which its comprehension doesn't depend on law of shape conformity, but more to the artist's intuition. Symbol which its elements also are unseparated construction. Because symbol is a round and intact unity (Sudiardja, 1982).



Photo of piggy bank ceramic produced by Ceramic Crafter from Dinoyo sub-district, Malang City, East Java Province. (Ponimin photo, July 2014)

## CONCLUSION

Piggy bank ceramic is one of craft product in Ceramic Craft Center of Dinoyo Malang . This money-saving-tool ceramic is started since 70's. All type of this piggy bank ceramic is known for holy objects which followed Hindu religion ritual believed by Indo-Chinese people. Pig is seen as wealth symbol, this spirit is extracted from pig which always eats until their body become fat. Wealth considered as creation idea is correlated to hard work with Indo-Chinese people. They always work and save their result diligently, the savings collected can be used for various needs and prosper the family life.

Piggy bank is no longer known by people since 80's, it because turned trend into chicken-shaped-piggy bank. Javanese people seem love chicken-shaped-piggy bank better. Chicken in Javanese people is called by '*sawung*', which means 'champion'. Champion gives more meaning for Javanese people, than pig-shaped piggy bank. Javanese people are also sensitive with pig-shape, which is considered as prohibited animal for Islamic adherents.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Astuti, A. (1995). *Tinjauan dan Teknologi Keramik*. UGM Press.
- [2] Amri, M. M. (1996b). 'Wayang Mbah Gandrung: Sebuah Tradisi Unik dari Desa Pagung, Kecamatan Semen, Kabupaten Kediri'. *Article presented at International Seminar of Nusantara's Speech Tradition*. Cooperation of Faculty of Literature Indonesia University and ATL.
- [3] Amri, M. M. (2001). 'Sekilas tentang Pengembangan Seni Topeng Malangan' dalam *Warta ATL*. September 2001. p.25-28.
- [4] Bogdan, R. C., & Sari, K. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research for Education*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- [5] Chernyshevsky, N. G. (2005). *Hubungan Estetik Seni dengan Realitas*. Bandung: Ultimius.
- [6] Culler, J. (1981). *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction*. London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- [7] Edwin, J. (2006). *Ekspresi Lokal dalam Fenomena global*. Jakarta: Pustaka LP3ES.
- [8] Effendi, Y. (2005). *Proses Artistik Kriya Menuju Industri Seni*. Forum Diskusi Penelitian dan Kepengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Bidang Seni DP3M Didjen Dikti Depdiknas RI, September 1st to 9th, 2005.
- [9] Goldmann, L. (1967). "Genetic Structuralism' in the Sociology of Literature". dalam Elizabeth Burns and Tom Burns (eds.). 1973. *Sociology of Literature and Drama*. Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd. p. 109-23.
- [10] Levi-Strauss, C. (1963). *The Effectiveness of Symbols*. in C. Levi-Strauss (ed.). *Structural Anthropology*. New York: basic books. 1963b. *Totemism*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- [11] Marianto, M. D. (2010). *Quantum Seni*. Semarang: Dahara Prize
- [12] Ponimin, (2001). *Keramik Dinoyo Malang, Kontinuitas dan Perubahannya*. Tesis program pengkajian seni rupa dan seni pertunjukan, Post Graduate Program of Gajah Mada University, Yogyakarta
- [13] Ponimin, (2005). Seni Gerabah Masa Lalu, Tinjauan aspek teknis, fungsi dan desain. *Jurnal Forum Penelitian, Year 17(2)*, December (2005). Research Institutes of State University of Malang
- [14] Ponimin, (2003). Gerabah Lokal Sebagai Cikal Bakal Keramik Dinoyo, Tinjauan Sejarah Seni Kriya. *History Journal: Kerajinan Sejarah dan Pengajaran, tahun ke sembilan No. 2 September (2003)*, Malang.
- [15] Ponimin, (2006). Contemporary Ceramic Art and Craft of Indonesia between Present day and Old World Culture. *International Seminar Article in Third Asna Clay Triennial International Karachi Pakistan November 11th-12th (2006)*, Art Council Karachi.
- [16] Hidayat, R. (2003). Topeng, Drama Tari Topeng dan Wayang Topeng di Malang. *Jurnal Sejarah Year, 9(2)*.

- [17] Soedarso, S. P. (1973). *Trilogi Seni: Penciptaan Eksistensi dan Kegunaan Seni*. BP  
Isi, Yogyakarta, 2006, papanek, victor, Design for The Real World. Toronto, New  
York, London: Bantan Books.
- [18] Soedarsono, R. M. (1985). *Peranan seni Budaya dalam Sejarah Kehidupan Manusia:  
Kontinuitas dan Perubahan*, Pidato Pengukuhan sebagai guru Besar pada Universitas  
Gadja Mada, Universitas Gadja Mada, Yogyakarta.
- [19] Soedarsono, R. M. (2001). *Metodologi Penelitian Seni Pertunjukan dan Seni Rupa*.  
Bandung: MSPI
- [20] Sachari, A. (1989). *Estetika Terapan*. Bandung: Penerbit Nova.
- [21] Santoso, S. (1995). *Perjalanan Keramik Indonesia (dalam 50 Tahun Indonesia  
Merdeka)*. Jakarta: Asaki.
- [22] Rohidi, T. R. (2000). *Kesenian dalam Pendekatan Kebudayaan*. Bandung: STISI,  
Bandung Press.
- [23] Rohidi, T. R. (2000). *Ekspresi Seni Orang Miskin*. Bandung: IKAPI.
- [24] Wuthnow, R., et al. (1984). *Cultural Analysis: The Work of Peter L. Berger, Mary  
Douglas, Michel Foucolt, and Jugen Hubermas*. Boston: Routledge & Kegal Paul.