



## Revitalization of Tattoo in a Plurality of Meanings with Negative Connotations from a Relativism Perspective

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### Abstract

This article describes the importance of revitalizing tattoos which are often discredited with negative connotations among the general public. The focus in this article is the process of developing sacred values in tattoos, where at the beginning they were considered as a culture, becoming a "stepchild" within the scope of art. Several aspects that have become the driving force for this change include doctrinization that emerged among society which was supported by the intervention of a certain religion to the government which made the negative stigma of tattoos attached to Indonesian society. The method used is descriptive qualitative. Therefore, with a relativism perspective and considering the historical value of tattoos in Indonesia as a noble culture which will be put forward in writing the article, it is a new discourse in responding to the negative stigma of tattoos. This study is also expected to have a positive impact in the form of a comparison of the same appreciation between tattoos and other two-dimensional works of art, which does not rule out the possibility of changing society's perspective in general and contributes a new framework of thinking that can be developed in further research.

**Keywords:** *Revitalization; Tattoos; Negative Connotations; Relativism; Historical*

### Introduction

Raising a theme that is oriented towards the author's perspective regarding tattoos, which are actually related in terms of the elements and values contained therein to other two-dimensional fine arts, but in everyday life are always attached to negative stigmas that emerge. Perception as an act that is irresponsible and gives the impression of dirtying the body, discrimination with views that link individuals who have tattoos with the criminal world, lack of acceptance in the work environment and so on are familiar things to discuss when talking about tattoos. The aesthetic value that seems "exclusive" is attached to two-dimensional works of art, which in this case are taken as an example, works of art painted on canvas, which is in sharp contrast to the stigma with negative connotations attached to tattoo art, which has resulted in its dominance in the lives of people who have the economic "level" can be said to be low and uneducated. The image of other works of art being massively packaged in such a way in the form of magnificent exhibitions seems to be clear evidence of how even within the scope of fine art tattoos are not seen as equal. Meanwhile, if seen from a "historical" perspective, tattoos are something that is close to the

lives of Indonesian people in the past. The existence of tattoos, which was considered a culture in ancient times, has changed to become something that is considered to "dirty the body". Meanwhile, if you look into the creative process, you can see several similarities that can be summarized between tattoo art and other branches of fine art. Attachment in the results of self-expression. Like other works of fine art, tattoos are works of art that are used as a means to express feelings, ideas and personal ideas which have subjective value for each individual who enjoys the work of art. As stated by Suzane K. Lengger in Darsono Sony Kartika (2004: 2) Art is a creation of symbolic forms of human feelings. Symbolic forms undergo transformation which is a universalization of experience which is a translation of certain experiences and is not just a thought. Both tattoos and other works of painted art are the result of certain ideas or ideas possessed by an individual which are expressed but in different media. In terms of meaning, both tattoos and other works of art are symbols that have a message and deep meaning for the owner. As explained by Kartika in Firman Rizki (2003: 6), "Painting is an expression of a person's aesthetic experience expressed in a two-dimensional plane (two dimensions) using visual media such as lines, colors, textures, shapes, and so on." Katjik Soecipto (1989: 20) adds "Painting is an expression of aesthetic feeling or is an interpretation of the painter in considering the object". Based on this explanation, it is clear that a tattoo and a work of painting have the same value and meaning for each individual who has it. Regarding the concept of creation and the process of creating tattoo works, the appreciation that emerges between tattoos and other works of fine art should be identical and equal, where the creativity and ability of an artist to convey an idea that emerges is a key element in the design process. Meanwhile, in terms of subjective acceptance, both tattoos and other works of fine art often face varying assessments depending on each individual's preferences and perspective. The thing that makes tattoo art different from other fine arts is the use of tools and materials and techniques in the process. The tools and materials used are needles, special ink that can be inserted into human skin and human body media. The techniques for creating works also have differences, where if painting is done by brushing with paint, in tattoo art the drawing and coloring process is done using a needle incision method with special ink that can be used on the human body. In general, the technique used in the tattooing process is the carving/scaring technique using an electric tattoo machine and the handpoke technique. It is certain that the elements of fine art, lines, colors and planes, are things that have top priority which will be carefully considered by a tattoo artist, because in creating a work of tattoo art, they also pay great attention to these elements of fine art in creating a tattoo. which has high aesthetic value. Mistakes resulting from a lack of understanding in the elements of art will cause a reduction in the aesthetic value of a tattoo, something which, if you look closely, is similar and even the reason why quality understanding and experience in art can determine the "strata" of artists who are reliable and "sellable" in the general public.

Not only focused on the similarities in essence they have, the reasons why tattoos are often considered as "stepchildren" in the scope of fine arts are interesting to explain, as well as the existence of tattoos in people's lives, especially the Indonesian people who adhere to eastern culture which makes art within the scope of tattoos something that is It is considered unworthy of appreciation, and quite a few artists even use the word "haram" to be brought into the scope of fine art. The emergence of views that link the image of tattoos with foreign cultures is one of the supporting causes which seems to strengthen the negative stigma in tattoo art. The development of this negative connotation led to the exclusion of tattoos from the circle of works of art. How very unfortunate it is that the existence of tattoos which are considered to be "stepchildren" within the scope of fine art itself has become a forerunner to the growing negative stigma attached to them.

Another thing that is no less important as a support for the emergence of this negative stigma, especially in Indonesia, is related to the policy regarding the terms and regulations of a state agency in the field of employment in recruiting its employees. It has become a mandatory requirement that every civil servant (PNS) employed must not have visible tattoos on their body. This is certainly a frightening specter for anyone who has a tattoo because it can influence or hinder them from getting certain jobs in countries that have this policy. This policy resulted in the development of tattoos to give the impression of seeking and placing itself in a scope that could accept it, which was none other than the lower classes of society.

This background is the basic reference for explaining the stigma that is developing in an effort to open up horizons of thinking which are expected to at least open or contribute new interpretations to society regarding the art of tattooing. Apart from its background and essence as a derivative of works of fine art, tattoos will also have excellent economic value if they can be separated from negative stigma and can be viewed as a complete work of art. According to Hassan (2005: 78), basically every individual has a different view of an idea, thing and problem. It is certain that it is not something easy that it can be said to be "necessary" to equalize the perception of all living individuals who have been guaranteed independence in thinking and determining their own opinions. Educational and religious backgrounds also play a role in being one of the bases for differences in perception between humans.

At least this article inspires readers to consider the existence of tattoos in Indonesian society, especially individuals who are involved in the scope of fine arts, as an option that an artist can choose to channel their skills in two-dimensional art, which does not rule out the possibility that tattoos can also be a source of income that has economic value. With several considerations, it is hoped that this can become an option for viewing angles that can be used when viewing a work of tattoo art. Another thing that we hope is that this article can at least provide a better ecosystem so that tattoos can be appreciated the same as other branches of two-dimensional art. Regarding this statement, the problem formulation will focus on: 1) The causes of the negative stigma of tattoos, and changes in the perception of tattoos in Indonesian society, and 2) How a relativism perspective should address tattoos. This writing explains it through a relativism perspective by considering the historical values contained.

## ***Results and Discussion***

As an individual whose daily life is very close and can even be said to be side by side with the cultural diversity that is always hailed as a characteristic of the Indonesian nation, it becomes a disturbing anxiety to encounter several "dogmatic" thought concepts that can one-sidedly determine the good and bad of something. matters without any in-depth consideration regarding them. The tendency to refuse to think openly and assume that something that is not common is necessarily something wrong can be the main reason for the formation of a number of Negative stigma remains attached and is very difficult to change in society. As a country that developed from a lifestyle that believes in habits taught from generation to generation without considering things that are outside of its beliefs, this can be one of the reasons why we often encounter this in the general public living in Indonesia. The tendency to determine values based on doctrine becomes a dilemma that leads individuals to not develop the breadth of their thinking.

The crystallization of belief in something taught from generation to generation is not absolutely negative. Maintaining a culture that has noble values, both in the arts and in how to live life in society, for example, of course has a positive effect and should be maintained by every society. Joko Siswanto (2009: vi, vii) stated that exploring local wisdom which is still scattered throughout Indonesia's diverse cultural treasures is very necessary. The great hope to participate in world progress but remain cultural can actually be realized by preserving one's culture, in line with that it can also protect a country so that it does not lose its identity in facing the crush of the very dynamic era of globalization. However, it is interesting because this statement also has the value of ambiguity in its application in interpreting the issue of tattoos. There are so many negative perceptions that attack tattoos, but at the same time, if you look closely, tattoos are a culture that has existed in Indonesia since time immemorial.

### **1. Tattoo Stigma**

As a work of art which of course has relativity in its meaning, Sumardjo (2000:45) states that art has subjective value in the form of an individual's view of an (object or art object) based on his experience and knowledge. Take a look from how the stigma of tattoos in today's society is attached to

negative connotations but is close to noble culture in Indonesia. Tattoos, which used to be a part of Indonesian culture, have now become something that is avoided in practice.

Culture is super-organic because it is hereditary and cross-generational, even though people change, culture and traditions will always exist and continue to live (Sjoraida et al, 2019). Several things that caused tattoo culture to change will be explained into several phases of the historical development of tattoos to the phenomena that caused the change in stigma.

From a "historical" point of view, tattoos are a form of culture that humans have had for a long time. Historically, tattoos were first discovered in Egypt when the Third and Fourth Gizeh dynasties were in power and the Great Pyramids were being built around 2800-2600 BC. Through the spread of power carried out by the Egyptian kingdom, tattoos were also introduced to their areas of power. Towards the 2000th century BC, the art of tattooing began to spread to South Asia, specifically in Yang Tze Kiang. An archaeologist, Professor Konrad Spindler from Insburk University, said that tattoo placement during this era contained elements of treatment (therapy). By 1000 BC, the existence of tattoos was increasingly visible, where at this time tattoos had spread to the East and the Pacific Ocean.

In its development, tattoos were also introduced by European nations who traveled to expand their territories. However, Polynesians existed before the arrival of Europeans. In Polynesian, tattoos are called "tatau" which means correct, straight or skilled (Hardin 1999). Polynesian society considers tattoos to be a parameter of beauty and masculinity. However, if we only discuss the history of tattoos that already exist in foreign cultures, the assumption will emerge that tattooing activities are only an absorption of foreign cultures that have recently emerged in Indonesia. However, in fact, Indonesia also has a culture that is inherent in the habit of tattooing.

Becoming known in Indonesia at the beginning of AD, Mentawai is concrete proof that the tattoo culture is already owned by Indonesian people. The meaning of the Mentawai people regarding tattoos is not an activity of expressing oneself by coloring body parts using permanent ink, but rather has a sacred value that is highly valued by the entire indigenous community and is an identity that the individual is very proud of. For example, a tattoo of a shaman or traditional elder in Mentawai is not the same as a tattoo of a hunting expert. Meanwhile, for Mentawai women, one of the tattoos that has a motif on their shoulders is a sign of their reproductive role as those responsible for human survival (Munaf, Gani, Rosa & Nura, 2001).

Similar appreciation can also be seen from the procedures in the traditional life of the Dayak tribe which provides an illustration of how tattoos are considered as a form of respect for their ancestors. As per the beliefs of the Dayak Iban and Dayak Kayan tribes, tattoos can function as a repellent for evil spirits and as an expression of gratitude to God regarding the beliefs of the Dayak tribe. Another example of a tribe that has a tattoo culture is Bali. In Balinese, tattoos are known as "mencoh" which means to tattoo the skin using a needle and ink. For the Balinese people, tattoos are considered sacred so they are only suitable for those in a higher position in society. The public's perspective in viewing tattoos in this era can be said to still have a positive connotation because they are an inseparable part of the cultural life of a society.

Moving from a life that adheres to animist beliefs to a life that has begun to recognize religion, tattoos have begun to be abandoned and have even begun to shift towards negative connotations because they are considered "haram" for certain religions. As if to add to the bad image of tattoos, the emergence of stereotypes that have developed in society through word of mouth that associate someone who has a tattoo is a criminal. The baseless discourse that says that a person who has a tattoo is associated with a recidivist is based on a story that has developed in society regarding the habit of prisoners while in prison carrying out tattooing of their body parts to fill their free time. So an opinion was formed which began to develop massively and over time this opinion turned into a stigma.

This opinion, which over time was believed to become fact, was exacerbated by government intervention in reinforcing the "stigma" which was already continuing to grow. A phenomenon of major human rights violations which has become a dark story for the Indonesian state which started with the government's policy to eradicate "thuggery" at that time. A very good idea but has a bitter reality in its implementation. Under the pretext of increasing the security of a country from criminals disturbing its people, the dictatorial government at that time made a breakthrough to kill many people who were considered rebels against the country's sovereignty. How could it not be, the brutal eradication of "thugs" by the government in that era resulted in many cases of murder by a mysterious shooter (Petrus) of people who were "considered thugs".

The word is considered very suitable to describe how many people who have tattoos are discredited as the characteristics of a thug without considering the need to prove who the person is. It is not uncommon to hear of cases of deaths caused by mysterious shooters targeting people who have nothing to do with any crime and have tattoos based on their appreciation for this branch of art. This was of course a scary "specter" to have a tattoo in that era. Based on the story that developed in society, most of the people with tattoos at that time were trying to "remove" their tattoos, the efforts made ranged from removing tattoos through surgery for economically stable people, to burning the tattooed skin using the heat of an iron for people who were in poverty. middle to lower economic conditions. This is a major contribution to drastically improving the bad state of the image of tattoos among society.

As if it is still within the same theme, another cause of negative stigma that arises due to the influence of the state, in this case is related to the regulations made in recruiting civil servants in Indonesia. There is no written regulation regarding not being allowed to have tattoos to become a state apparatus ready to be assigned to serve the public. It is an ambiguous policy where a country includes mandatory regulations regarding conditions and prerequisites that have no correlation with strong reasons and seem to be still influenced by the stigma that has developed among the people behind it. Instead of focusing on the quality of the state civil servants who will be recruited, the selection of civil servants actually discards many people who do not meet the requirements and prerequisites, especially in terms of tattoos. The emergence of concerns regarding the future if you have a tattoo arises due to the conditions and prerequisites in this job search. The fear of not getting the job you want is also a big reason why tattoos are avoided by the younger generation today. However, 2019 seems to be a breath of fresh air where several agencies, especially the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade and others, have begun to eliminate restrictions regarding the conditions for prohibiting tattoos. It is not a hope that cannot be realized if one day the existence of tattoos will no longer be an obstacle for someone living in Indonesia to get a decent job for their life.

Moving on to the current era of life where external cultural influences are so free to enter based on our open commitment to the development of the times. but according to (Kasiyan, 2003): "the conclusion is the great hope of our open commitment to world civilization, for the possibility of our culture being able to 'exist' together (being together) in the format of truly equal plurality among all nations, so that it can be achieved "The degree of universal humanity and civilization cannot be manifested comprehensively." As if to provide evidence for this statement, the tattoo phenomenon among young millennials is often based solely on the desire to be like someone they idolize. A concrete example that can conclude that tattoo activities in the current era are much different from those in the past is the frequent discovery of young people who want to have a tattoo without having a strong basis or knowledge about what tattoo they will choose. Many of them actually give full rights to determine what illustration images are considered suitable to the tattoo artist, without having a philosophy or meaning that has its own value for that person.

From this point of view, tattoos can now be said to be a modern lifestyle. Lifestyle is a product of the interaction of heredity, environment and personal creative power (Dewi Haryaningsih, Mumuh M. Z, Gugun Gunardi 2014). According to Kotler (2002: 192) Lifestyle is a person's pattern of living in the

world which is expressed in their activities, interests and opinions. In line with this, another opinion says that lifestyle is a person's pattern of living in everyday life which is expressed in the activities, interests and opinions concerned (Rismiati E & Suratno, 2001). Lifestyle concerns all aspects of an individual's life starting from habits, views to the way an individual dresses. Starting from the style of clothing, hair make-up, even all the accessories that are attached are part of a person's self-reflection or identity. According to (Nugraheni, 2003) there are two factors that influence lifestyle, namely within the individual (internal) and outside the individual (external). Internal factors that influence lifestyle are individual attitudes, observations and experiences as well as an individual's personality and character. Meanwhile, external factors that can influence an individual's lifestyle can come from relationships, family, reference groups and culture.

The emergence of the view that tattoos are a lifestyle among young Indonesians today is mostly caused by external influences. Globalization is the basis for the strength of external influences in influencing the lifestyles of young Indonesians. For young people today, tattoos are often associated with counter culture and pop culture. The culture of resistance developed by the younger generation today is simply considered a form of resistance to social norms that apply in society, supervision of dominant groups and so on. Tattoos then became widespread with their multiple interpretations. Together with piercing, tattoos are interpreted as simply joining in, rebellion or resistance or self-expression and a sense of art. (Olong: 2006). In this era, the problem that arises is what our attitude should be in preventing the younger generation from interpreting the existence of tattoo culture, not just as a fashion without having a little knowledge behind it. Tattoos that change their function to make-up or fashion are also considered conceptually inconsistent, because fashion is a field dominated by capital and has weaknesses in the field of commitment (Fisher 2002). The character of fashion which is always changing rapidly can at any time cause tattoo trends to begin to be abandoned within a short period of time. This is very important to pay attention to because it can indirectly cause the existence of tattoos to remain high but completely devoid of the values that are their basic foundation. The need to revitalize tattoos is carried out in response to the tendency of young people to only impose and legitimize their position as human beings who are open to outside culture and want to make someone they idolize become a reference in the fashion aspect due to their commitment to maintaining the philosophical value of tattoos which is not found in them.

## **2. Tattoos from a Relativism Point of View**

From a relativism point of view, it is clear that every living creature can express itself according to its own wishes and receive equal respect in art. However, if you pay close attention, it is clear from the explanation above why tattoos can be integrated into the habits of low economic communities. The stigma that people with tattoos are "recidivists" or convicts who commit tattoos while in prison has led to tattoos being used only as a "trend" by the younger generation.

Evidence of how this dominance is seen is how appreciation for tattoos is currently still not on par with appreciation in other fields of fine art, for example painting. Some of us are familiar with the proliferation of two- and three-dimensional art exhibitions held in Indonesia, especially in big cities. In contrast, tattoo exhibitions are very difficult to find, even in a city that has the title of having a high level of artistry like Yogyakarta, it is very rare to see art performances which include "performance art tattoos".

Another thing that can be evidence of how tattoos have a very strong dominance in low economic communities is the price set for getting a tattoo compared to a painting. Of course, in this case, who is behind a work of art can be an "argument" that seems to deny the "caste" differences between the two works of art. However, if we don't close our eyes to the facts that are happening in everyday life, the gap between tattoos and paintings is very clear. The "exclusivity" of an illustration using canvas is completely different from an illustration using human skin. Of course, it goes back to differences in opinion, everyone has their own aesthetic standards. It's just that if it wasn't added to the wild stigma that has a

negative connotation about tattoos, there is a possibility that appreciation for this artistic activity would develop a little more in a better direction.

In essence, art can contain something that functions to express oneself. There are various ways to express oneself in the context of art, both two-dimensional and three-dimensional. Tattoos can be categorized as artistic entities not only in the form of visible forms in the form of artifacts that can be seen and felt, but also regarding aesthetic, simple, happy, emotional, individual and subjective values (Sumardjo, 2000). According to Lowenfed (1982) "Art is a foundation of human humanity. Humans consciously and unconsciously have the basic ability to channel ideas, thoughts and feelings through artistic activities." The true goal is to provide positive feedback both in terms of calming emotions, making meaning of something, and as an outpouring of the hearts of each individual living creature.

*Outputs* The self-expression that comes out of each individual is of course different according to their character, emotions and all aspects of life experienced within them. For example, post-mastectomy tattoos (a surgical procedure that removes all breast tissue) help women rebuild their self-confidence from the impact of surgery and the disease they suffer from (Leader 2016). Another example is the double mastectomy tattoo of a woman named Inga Duncan Thornell which went viral in 2014. Some of the examples above provide answers with art that has the character of freedom to express oneself, people can feel healed mentally, more than that, art can also understand other people's emotions. . Regarding a person's motivation for getting a tattoo, a lot of research has been conducted to find out what motivates someone to tattoo parts of their body. There are at least 5 motivations that are quite prominent and are the reasons why someone tattoos their body according to (Wohlrab, Stahl, & Kappeler, 2007), namely:

First, as a means of beautifying oneself and part of art (Beauty, art and fashion). In this motivation, both the artist and the individual being tattooed depart from an appreciation that a tattoo is a work of art that has beauty and focuses on the aesthetic value of the tattoo. Tattoos are also considered accessories that can be used to improve body parts that are considered less beautiful, such as eyebrow tattoos, lip tattoos and so on, which are tailored to the user's wishes. This motivation is very often found among young people who consider the use of tattoos on their bodies as a form of personal make-up that has aesthetic value. Another opinion that is in line says "tattoos are middle class fashion accessories worn at international fashion shows" LeMay (2008).

Second, as an identity owned by an individual (Individuality). Tattoos being an identity is another motivation that drives someone to have a tattoo. "Another line of motivation embeds the desire to create and maintain self-identity, being special and distinctive from others (Millner & Eichold, 2001). The identity in question is because tattoos have unique powers that can differentiate them from other individuals. Someone who has this motivation also often thinks that tattoos can reflect creativity. Another example of tattoos as identity can also be seen from the use of tribal tattoos in Indonesia, where the use of tattoos is motivated to clarify an individual's identity.

Third, as a narrative that has certain values. (Personal Narratives) In general, this is a motivation that is often found in tattoo owners. A tattoo is a story about life, life experiences and views on life as well as something in the form of a narrative reminder and expressed in a tattoo. "Tatto narratives involve subjects narrating with their bodies and of their bodies. In other words, there are stories on the body and the body in the story. (Brooks, 1993). The expression expressed by an individual through tattoos is about a precious, sad moment or an important event that they have gone through in their life.

Fourth, a symbol of resistance. The next motivation underlying a person to get a tattoo can also be a form of resistance carried out by an individual against someone or a condition that is considered to be in conflict with him which he cannot express directly. "A recent study of college students found that especially in adolescence protest against the generation of parents is a major aspect in accommodating body modification" (Delazar in Wohlrab, 2007). Not only about motivational tattoos, they are also the main basis for clothing styles and even music choices among today's young people.

Fifth, cultural traditions and spirituality (Spirituality and cultural tradition). This motivation appears a lot in the use of traditional tattoos. As previously discussed, this motivation is a motivation that can be said to be human motivation for using tattoos traditionally. Although these 5 reasons are different, giving the impression of many motivations underlying someone getting a tattoo, they cannot all be separated. This is because the decision to get a tattoo cannot be separated from the socio-cultural context.

## **Conclusion**

First, the stigma attached to tattoos emerged and developed in Indonesia, in this case it is negative due to several things. Based on the explanation of the material above, it can be seen about the phenomena that are the basis for the formation of negative stigma in tattoo art. Starting from something that is considered sacred and is a culture, then it is exposed to stories that develop in society due to state intervention. The state's unilateral opinion through the ruling government decides that someone who has a tattoo is a group of "marginalized", dissidents, and is a group that is close to criminal activity. This was followed by regulations that were created to increase the difficulties faced by tattoo users in finding work, resulting in them experiencing ostracism in social life as someone who was inevitably considered useless in society. Not only that, the religious norms discussed above are also a driving force in increasing the strength of the negative stigma embedded in every society regarding someone who has a tattoo. Responding to this, it is important for each of us to add a view of relativism to the fine arts perspective in order to open up breadth and openness in thinking and responding to tattoos. However, considering the historical value contained, tattoos are a culture that has been considered sacred in Indonesia since ancient times. For example, Mentawai tattoos and Balinese tribal tattoos, it can be concluded that the existence of tattoos has been an original culture since ancient times which has certain meanings and meanings in cultural life and is owned by Indonesia. It is time for us to open our minds regarding one branch of two-dimensional tattoo art.

Apart from being a work of art, tattoos are also part of the ancestral culture of the Indonesian people. It would be good if we as Indonesians maintained and preserved the culture inherited from our ancestors so that we have a strong foundation in facing cultural exchange in this era of globalization. Even though understanding and using tattoos as a traditional ritual and a spiritual belief is no longer relevant to adhere to in the current era, as humans who have a better understanding of culture we should appreciate the culture of our nation. The hope of not getting caught in the circle of dogmatic thought patterns that develop in society is an important motivation presented in this article.

Second, morally, the visualization of self-expression in the form of painting without involving or disturbing other people is agreed to be something that is "legitimate" for every individual to do. This self-expression does not require one medium in its manifestation, a person can explore all the media that exist in nature but must take certain considerations so that art, which means beauty, does not lose its essence. Based on the freedom to express oneself, a person cannot immediately view tattoos as being related to all the negative paradigms given to them. Meanwhile, based on the values contained in it, art is very "individualist" where something that has a very deep meaning according to an art lover is very natural if it is not considered to have more value by other art lovers. In other words, the aesthetic value in a work of art is something relative and private. Tattoos on a person's body cannot describe that person's character. The body is not only recognized as a medium for the penetration of experience into oneself, but also becomes a medium for the emanation of expression and self-actualization, so that experience and expression are dialectically related (Bruner, 1986). What's more, if the tattoo has a meaning that can only be seen if you use artistic glasses to look at it.

An artist's perspective should be fair and balanced in appreciating every work of art that exists. Likewise, with tattoo art, from a fine art perspective, a tattoo is a work of art that is on the same level as other two-dimensional works of art. The only thing that differentiates this work of art is that it is based on



the individual's own skin. Meanwhile, the meaning and value contained in it are the same as the meaning and value contained in other works of art. According to Armstrong (1991), "basically every body transmits meaning, but tattooed bodies are unique and different because of the way they articulate their meaning with symbols." Instead of being discriminated against, tattoos even get added value in terms of their uniqueness in conveying the meaning they contain. In this case, it is clear that nothing that has a bad meaning was found in the execution of the tattoo from a fine arts point of view. Based on the existence of religious or other points of view that interfere with or become a benchmark for consideration by each individual, it is entirely the decision of the individual himself. However, it starts from the importance of accepting that aesthetic values are substantially free and not influenced by any view and are purely seen in the interests of beauty. So with the explanation explained above, it is hoped that it can have a positive impact on every individual regarding tattoos, especially artists, without ruling out the possibility of creating a good ecosystem for tattoo art, especially in terms of appreciation in the cultural sphere and allowing it to become an option or a new choice that has good economic value for every artist in Indonesia.

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