

**LOCAL WISDOM:  
A SOLUTION TO SURPASS HEDONISM EFFECTS  
ON ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Science and technology on modern human create dualism result which complete opposite. Those results are as proper instrument to fulfill increasingly complex of human need and as nature exploitation instrument with dehumanization as result and also the trap of historical rationality. The hedonism ethics trend has a significant role on the second result. It means, whether the hedonism terminology is limited with "lust" meaning which refer to ego existence. Therefore the nature will define as "phallus" which will exploit freely as the exploitation subject to fulfill the lust, and the heavy pollution on environment is unavoidable. This historical rationality should be cut as an effort to save the future. Local wisdom is a promising therapy alternative. Local wisdom has universal values to return to the nature path; namely ethical values with natura magistrate principal on interaction, interrelation and interdependency relation between human and nature. Only this harmony will able to maintenance the sustainable environmental protection to the future.*

**Keywords :** local wisdom, hedonism, environmental pollution

**INTRODUCTION**

Science and technology as device made modern human able to conquer and overwhelm nature. Science and technology highly affect the era at present time. Therefore, this era called renovate era or innovation technology era. A lot of giant machines have replaced human muscle. The production system has changed into mass production and demands a market globalization process, which changes the significance of geopolitics into geo-economics. This process creates a path of global trading which then becomes an economical colonization.

This development shows that human ability is very high. This human ability has changed and destroyed the environment and ecosystem balance. The dilemma of development the environmental maintenance and conservation not only happens in national scale but also in global scale. If human unable to conserve natural resources and environment therefore the development could not be sustainable.

The unresolved problems at this moment are structural imbalance, poverty, irrational natural resources use, production and consumption without environmental support. Therefore, this condition – sooner or later – will affect human life on this planet. This phenomenon can be seen through the unemployment, poverty, consumerism, pollution, global warming which becoming the climate changes in human life [Zen, 1981].

Science and technology development has made modern human life easier and more comfortable. However, this development also creates dehumanization and de-personification in modern life. The change and shifting can be seen through the behavior, lifestyle, and the values whereas humanity values are getting thinner and the social entropy.

## THE METHODS

### Science and Technology as Legitimizing Device

Intellectual revolution started at the beginning of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century in Europe with the use of intellectual methods in technology innovation. This revolution also created industrial revolution. The technology development reaches its peak in information and telecommunication technology development in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Technology revolution has created various developments and economic growth which raise the income of many countries especially the West European countries with strong industrial support.

Science and technology development is inseparable from human civilization history. This development also changed human civilization deeply. Science and technology is a social process which highly affected by various significance and values system. Therefore, science and technology are inseparable from its social-culture values setting.

Science and technology which started in the west could not be separated from the West values. It has a legitimating form for deterministic-materialistic. This opinion stated by Francis Bacon (1561-1626) who said 'knowledge is power'. This statement means that science is a form of power. Science has its own position and deep meaning in human life. Descartes also has metaphysical frame *cogito ergo sum* as the base of human rationality. This statement has created modern human who highly tribute ratio.

Francis Bacon and Descartes then continue in the ideas of 19<sup>th</sup> century which has dominant effect on human civilization. Those ideas are:

1. Evolution idea. This idea mentions that the high form developed from lower forms though natural and automatically process. For about the last one hundred years this idea has systematically implemented to all aspects of life without exception,
2. Completion idea which states that natural selection and the survival of the fittest are trying to explain evolution process and natural and automatically development.
3. The idea of high form of human life such as religion, philosophy, art and others as Marx called *phantasmagoria* are only an addition to material life process. They are built to cover and raise economic needs, because the whole human history actually is a class struggle history.
4. Freudian idea. It considers all form of human life is dark subconscious vibration and explain those are the result of the unfulfilled desires of childhood and pre-teenager.
5. Relativism idea which reject any absolutism, melt any norm, value and measurement.
6. Positivism idea. It only interest to know hoe and reject the possibility of the knowledge on “meaning and goal” in metaphysic context. [Schumacher, 1981].

Those ideas mention above has deeply absorbed by Western civilization and create a materialistic metaphysic. The heritages of 19<sup>th</sup> century has affected civilization, science and technology in the journey of human history which create a secularism trend in this modern era such as evolutionism, rationalism, scientism, utilitarianism, and hedonism.

Science and technology development gives effortless and comfort in modern human life. However, it also has effects such as dehumanization and depersonalization process in modern life. The change and shift could be seen through behavior, lifestyle, and values whereas the human values are getting thinner, and create social entropy.

Therefore, the development in modern life in turn will only bring human into a false life. Hedonism is the base of modern human life. This can be seen through behavior and lifestyle which emphasize and desire comfort “passion” and life enjoyment.

### **Hedonism as a Lifestyle**

Hedonism, one of ethics branch, is an opinion which emphasize on comfort and enjoyment as a form of lifestyle. Hedonism ethics stimulates human desires and instincts to behave fulfilling “passion” and adore comfort and enjoyment in irrational consumption. The trace on this opinion shows that these ideas are not accidentally surface. The opinion of hedonism actually is a form of certain ethic of the goodness could be found on comfort or power.

The first figure who taught hedonism in the history of Greek philosophy is Democritus (400 A.D. – 370 A.D.). The word hedonism comes from Greek *he done* which means enjoyment. Democritus view enjoyment as the main goal of human life. This enjoyment here is not physical enjoyment but enjoyment to stimulate human intellectuality. Then, Aristippus (433 A.D. – 355 A.D.) said that enjoyment is the only thing human seek for. The enjoyment here is the enjoyment directly connected to fulfill the physical needs [Bertens, 2004].

Whether the enjoyment has individualistic or egoistic nature according to Epicurus (341 – 370 A.D.) enlarged those enjoyment meanings. He said that enjoyment mean the non-existence of pains of body and soul difficulties. However the soul path here has emphasized and erased the faith which created the nervous in the soul such as the death thing. Therefore to comfort the soul it has to get enjoyment with psychological nature [Hazlitt, 2003].

The Epikuros opinion which mentioned enjoyment with its psychological nature has changed in 18<sup>th</sup> century. Human behavior which desire “passion” and irrational consumption in human life has affected environmental reservation and will bring various implications on human existence. These are mentioned by [Hutcheson, 1725] ‘greatest happiness for greatest number’.

This opinion affects the modern philosophers and called utilitarianism which means use and utility. This branch develops by two figures Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and J.S. Mill (1806-1871) which principally base on ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’ or ‘the greatest happiness for the greatest number’ [Greenwald, 1982].

Bentham made happiness and pain as the base of his opinion of enjoyment value context. He said the good ethical nature is counting in detail the happiness and the pain as the result of an act and then reduce the happiness and pain. This counting called hedonistic calculus. J.S. Mill emphasized on quality, different from Bentham which emphasized on quantity, human has the ability to reach the highest happiness/ enjoyment. Emotional enjoyment is preferable than physical enjoyment. A good act is an act which gives the wanted result [Said, 1980].

### **The Effect on Environment**

The perspective about nature has to be aware of and fully understood. The perspective is the meaning and function of nature for human life. The nature will not behave well if human manage it without wisdom. The raise of understanding and instilling on nature could be gained through Mahatma Gandhi statement "the earth has provided enough to fulfill every need of human, but not to satisfy the greed". Human has to preview earth as a conveyance that feed him, however the earth has been sucked dry and highly exploited which in turn made the earth surface condition painful and sad [Schumacher, 1980]

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSION**

The understanding and instilling of human is also in critical condition. The all historic behavior, only human of all creature created by God who able to instill time in his life, has behave without considering his history. Human has lack in understanding and instilling in the existence of trans-generation in the future and historical dimension. Even human aware of the time dimension, it only in narrow meaning, as the time shows on the watch on his wrist, and sometimes it only limited on the behavior and nature of economical behavior. Time dimension understanding with commercialistic economy has a dominant role in this modern life of human. The wrong understanding and instilling of human, nature, and time dimension has an unfortunate effect on human life history. One of the effects is the environmental pollution as the life conveyance and the life of the human himself.

At this present the pollution problem not only a national or regional problem but a global problem. It can be seen through the policy of the UN in MDGs project, global warming and climate change. David L. Sils said there are five major problems which need attention, namely: prejudice, peace, population, poverty and pollution. Other very famous studies by the MIT Project Team which created pro and contra also study the five main factors which decide and also limit the growth in this planet earth, namely population, farming production, natural resources, industrial production, and pollution. Those two studies have seen pollution as a problem which has to be faced by the world this day [Rivai, 1974].

The research on pollution can be seen through a narration of Trowulan as a classical example. "According to *Negara Kertagama* book, the capital of Majapahit, Trowulan, is very wealthy. There is no lack of water since there is a big pond and network system to drain water all over the place for the whole year. In 1926 Maclaine found eighteen big dams in Mojokerto that has been built in Majapahit era. Four of the dams were situated in Trowulan. However when Raden Wijaya ascended the throne he chose the rich natural resources of forest with big trees and animals as the capital." The result of the deforestation are the flood, dry season, the rich soil eradication, animal migration and the extinction of some flora and fauna as natural resources. Some historians mentioned that this environmental damage cause the destruction of Majapahit kingdom. [Komaruddin, 1985].

The story of Trowulan shows that environmental destruction resulted in disaster and pollution. The problem is classic which always happen through human act and behavior. However the environmental and pollution problem in past time has a smaller scale as the human thought at that time, however at this present the problem has become global and complex. This problem develops as the development of human civilization which has reached high at this present. It connected with the economy definition mentioned by Lionel Robbins on "unlimited need concept." This concept has a meaning – explicitly and implicitly – the excessive exploitation on natural resources will resulted on the threat on the condition of environmental life quality.

According to Barry Commoner, there are at least six main threats cause by human on environmental pollution, namely fire, machine (internal combustion), lead, phosphate and nitrate, detergent, insecticide, pesticide, herbicide and radio active spread. These causes have create effects on environment as the conveyance of human life, namely the worsening and decreasing of environmental quality, such as mineral resources, the disturbing and destroying of soil and forest, the water and air pollution as result of industrial pollution. Fire use in hunting and moving farming has made the deforestation through uncontrolled forest fire. The salting process has decrease farming soil which followed by the population increase and industrialization. In the past it needs centuries to destroy the rich soil, but at this present it only need few years. All over the earth there are intensive deforestation and the destroying of other vegetation which shelter the soil which in turn will result in erosion, flood and drought [Rivai, 1974].

Human excessive expansion has creates an ecological disequilibrium. It can be seen through soil and air pollution, physiological and psychological disturbance, voice pollution which disturb mental concentration and resulted in various tiredness and new disease such insomnia. Technology ability and power is raising, therefore the side effect and potency of disaster also rising.

Science and technology implication in development process has resulted as planned and wanted, but there are also unplanned and unwanted side effects. The forms of side effects of the development effects are:

1. The natural resources decreasing, for example the decrease of mineral resources, soil and forest,
2. Biological pollution, such as pollution of human disease carrier and animal and vegetation plague,
3. Chemical pollution caused by industrial waste, pesticide, heavy metal, detergent and other active substances,
4. Physical disruption and destruction, such as thermal, voice and sedimentation pollution,
5. Social disruption, such as the awareness to socialize [Rivai, 1974].

### **Local Wisdom as Solution**

The metaphysical mistake made the science and technology development and progress to create the shifting and crashing of values. Hedonism as the past heritage gives an important role in forming the modern human consumptive behavior and lifestyle base on individualistic-materialistic. Hedonism has brought serious effects such as pollution, since it has drained natural resources without considering environmental factor. This is an effect of egoistic passion and taste colored with hedonism. Therefore to prevent those effects the development process as human raising image should has good and controlled measurement, namely considering ecological human parameters.

As mentioned by the wise God Almighty does not create anything this world in to a waste, it means everything in this world has its function which interrelated, interacted, and inter-dependend. This is the most intrinsic of a system. The fact is true and of course undeniable and unavoidable. Therefore the talk on human always related to several of good and correct measurements of a holistic-cybernetic system. Therefore local wisdom could be use as a good medicine (*panacea*) to answer complex problems face by the modern human as their irrational behavior conquering nature. Modern human failure to manage problem complexity they faced forces them to find alternatives. Those alternatives offer a new way to look at the abandoned cultural values. The cultural values might be broken by the human behavior. In simple, the local wisdom could be defined as high wisdom or values inside the local culture richness. However, sometimes local wisdom embodied in a slogan to "back to nature" or *natura magistra* in managing environment [ Armawi, 2008].

Cultural crash could be avoided through cultural wisdom which is more sublime to support bigger community structure and create a creative and smart cultural reproduction. Whether this local wisdom related to the Indonesia reality, there are seventeen percents of the world ethnic reside in this archipelago. This is a mega project for the many philosophers of the pre-modern to contemporary era. For example in anthropology study there is a language which only has fifteen speakers or even no speaker at all.

A critical question might surface why in this globalization era when the whole world as though becoming a global village there is a talk of local things. This phenomenon looks like a deferential culture which only interest in image of development context on an alternative construction to answer the intellectual's questions on modern human dilemma. The answer is an idea called local wisdom. The local wisdom will answer the problem with local measurement which highly desires harmonic values.

## CONCLUSION

Traditional philosophy mentioned that human is a *capax universe*, means human has ability to bring the whole universe in his understanding and instilling. Therefore the opening of human world made him able to instill the meaning of "time" function. The instilling of time will bring human to the experience of the past, present and the future. Human ability will be able to create the past in present dimension and the future through plans and prophecies.

Let us think again the statement of [Daed Yoesoef, 1981: viii] "our country we own together is not a heritage of 66, 45, 28, or 08 generation or our older ancestor, but this is a loan for us from the future generation, of our children."

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