

Abstract of Book
“The Authority of Javanese Woman: Reinstate Values in Javanese Culture”
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This book contains the result of the study that was conducted in 2002-2003 among the Javanese women living in the southern Yogyakarta (6 km before Parangtritis Beach). It describes how the Javanese women precisely have authority when applying their femininity. This book particularly offers the argumentative proposition that entirely disagrees with the idea that Javanese women are the victim of male domination. Power relation in this culture should be understood using the paradigm of Javanese culture (not using the feminism doctrine measured from the other culture). In brief, this book conveys the objection toward the study of gender that unfairly using the paradigm of foreign culture to judge the conducts of people living in the different culture.

This book has several important contributions to knowledge and pragmatic aspect as well. Knowledgeably, the research of this book refers to the accumulation of local knowledge, particularly the theory of Javanese authority, which is formed by appreciating the local culture. Since the method of the study has included ‘the local value’ or ‘having the qualities of Javanese’ as the theoretical framework, this book tries to dismantle the new nuance of power relation between man and woman. Cultural premise about the complementarity between man and woman, resulted from the Javanese way of thinking and requires the capability of managing paradox, has enabled the two writers to refuse the premise that Javanese women are subjugated by men. In fact, they have authority just because their femininity. Moreover, they have been portrayed exactly as the bonds of hegemony because the essence of the feminine Javanese theory of power. Their endurance and emotional intelligence, as the standard of appropriateness in Javanese power relation, enable the women to be the determinant. Moreover, the cultural background of the Javanese that gives the authority for the women to manage the economic sector of the family also becomes the other aspect that promotes women to be the decision maker in their family. Being the dominant contributor of the domestic income along with the cultural values that tend to shape men’s perception that they are not worthy of money, and also the ability of women to manage the family budget, have respectively produced the determined Javanese women.

Methodically, this study presents two interesting aspects. They are: Firstly, the writers show their understanding on the gender study and its relevance with the spirit of feminist struggles. Besides, they ask the readers not to be counterfeited by being feminist. Moreover, the gender issue is seen as the matter of social construction, so that is why this study employs several novels and discourse analysis (daily conversation) as the reference. The devotion of the Javanese theory of power undoubtedly has contributed to the critical idea of this analysis. For that importance, the writers have to allocate half of the contents of their book with theoretical justification of the Javanese power. In order to strengthen the theoretical ground, the writers also take the readers to experience the Javanese culture layer by layer as if peels the onion. Secondly, the writers competently combine the theoretical construction with the real evidences that are easily recognized in the daily life of the Javanese. Their experiences as the activist have enabled them to bring the reality of life as the undeniable facts. Based on the two aspects, this surprising study is hard to refute.

Pragmatically, this study discovers three serious implications those are: First, the concept of gender fairness have to be understood accurately and suitably refers to the local

values. Fair is not always equal. It happens because of the functional difference and manifestation of men's and women's power. Second, the program of woman empowerment needs to be formulated accurately. The empowerment that is conducted by the misunderstanding of culture (in this case Javanese culture) is exactly worthless. Third, the empowerment of Javanese women, when needed, should refer to the feminine aspect itself.