

Vessel and Tradition in Ceramic Art

2015

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Acknowledgement

With all gratefulness to God, I would like to express my gratitude to those who gave me motivation, inspiration, support, assistance and sacrifice in obtaining this educational degree.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation especially to my supervisors, Professor Okada Teruo and Professor Kojima Kaitaro. I would like to thank them for always being patient in giving me support, knowledge, guidance, criticism and suggestions during the making of my artworks and the writing of this report. I would also like to thank them for being extraordinary mentors for me.

I would also like to thank Professor Kanbara Masaaki, Professor Kusano Yoshihiro, and Professor Suzuki Madoka as my supervisors during the writing of the report. I would like thank them for their guidance, corrections, and all assistance from the beginning to the completion of this writing. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Morita Aki, Professor Christopher Walton, Professor Tokimitsu Shingo, Mr. Inoue Masataka, all of the lecturers at the Art and Design Department and all of the Japanese language lecturers at Bekka. I would like to humbly thank them for all the support and assistance they gave during my study years.

I would also like to thank Institut Teknologi Bandung and JICA with its "ITB Development Project (III)" for the scholarship granted to me so that the study process I underwent could be completed smoothly and well.

I especially would like to thank my family. I would like thank my beloved mother, my mother in-law and father in-law for their prayers and guidance. Also I would like to thank Mr. Nurdian Ichsan for all the assistance and his willingness to be a good friend, mentor, and family for me. Further, my gratitude also goes to all my friends who supported me during the making of the artworks and the writing of the report. Eventually, my gratitude goes to my wife and son; thank you for all your love and support; thank you for being the most wonderful parts of the processes in my life.

Kurashiki, February 2015

ABSTRACT

VESSEL AND TRADITION IN CERAMIC ART

Gita Winata

A12ZD01

It can be said that the discourse concerning modern and contemporary ceramic art is generally divided into the vessel and the figure. The subject area of this research is the vessel. The vessel is a tendency for ceramic artists to create ceramic artworks by exploring ideas from vessel forms as a basic reference. Vessel objects have served as a means of tradition and evolved as a means of artistic expressions that have been used by modern artists to express their ideas and feelings.

The type of this research is “research by project”, a series of research activities based on studio work in combination with a comprehensive research report. This research aims to interpret the philosophy and values of traditional vessels in the context of ceramic art and how they are used as a source of ideas in the process of creating art. Here, this research specifically tries to identify the traditional Indonesian *kendi* for form, and the Japanese *Bizen* pottery tradition for material and technique. For these purposes, this research focuses on analysis through literature review on the theories of tradition and vessel in the context of ceramic art with regard to their history, definition and development. Studio work is conducted by exploring forms of *kendi*, and exploring materials and traditional techniques of *Bizen* pottery.

Through this process of investigation, several conclusions were obtained: Tradition provides the basic language of expression conveyed through form, surface and process, while the artist serves to interpret and express those values with a modern vision, keeping tradition alive and viable in the contemporary age. Knowledge of traditional vessel can be explored through the material, technical, or aesthetic approaches. Two series of ceramic artworks completed this study. The first series, “Sharing,” emphasized the vessel as metaphor of inheritance. The second series, “Connectivity,” presented the essence of the vessel as a means of connecting space.

Keywords: Traditional Ceramic, Vessel, *Kendi*, *Bizen* Pottery.

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Introduction

- **Background**

Research commenced with a great interest in traditional ceramic objects. Generally, there are three aspects which become the initial background of the research. First, motivation for this research was propelled by previous exploration into one of the types of Indonesian traditional ceramics. Second, there was interest in exploring more deeply the understanding of traditional ceramics through study of Indonesian and Japanese traditional ceramics. Third, there existed a strong desire to create ceramic artwork based on knowledge of traditional vessel objects.

Generally, this research discusses issues concerning vessels. In the discourse of ceramic art, vessel is a terminology referring to a ceramic artists' tendency to create ceramic artworks by exploring ideas from vessel forms as a basic reference. Thus, the basic philosophy of creation is built on the understanding and interpretation of artists on vessels as an object of interest. In my perception, vessels are objects possessing the ability to record and present various problems faced by individuals performing certain roles in their social environments. It is similar to a tool which presents both a problem and solution simultaneously.

Specifically, the research focuses on investigating the philosophy and values of traditional vessels. That said, the research involves two types of ceramic traditions, the traditional Indonesian *kendi* and the Japanese *Bizen* pottery tradition. *Kendi* was chosen as the object of the study because it has important historical values in the context of ceramic tradition in Indonesia. Additionally, *kendi* is considered to have unique form characteristics with great potential as a form reference source. It was an exceptional opportunity for me to study further in Japan, a culture with a long and well-established ceramic tradition. *Bizen* pottery is one of the six historical ceramic traditions in Japan (known as the Six Ancient Kilns of Japan). The unglazed characteristics are intriguing and the traditional firing techniques using the *noborigama* kiln exude great appeal for further study and use as material and technique reference source. Concerning the creative process, the forms and concepts of the artwork is based on knowledge and skills derived from the abovementioned objects of tradition. By creating this work, I hope to expand my horizon, augment my understanding and absorb knowledge in traditional vessels.

- **Research Objectives**

- To interpret the philosophy and values of traditional vessels in the context of ceramic art.

- To further use the interpretation as a main reference or a source of ideas in the artwork creative process.
- In relation to the creative process, to identify the traditional Indonesian *kendi* as a reference of form, and Japanese *Bizen* pottery as a reference of material and technique.

- **Research Methodology**

This research is categorized as "research by project", which is a series of research activities based on artwork creation consisting of studio work and research report writingⁱ. In this research category, the researcher acts not only as the writer but also as the artist. The studio work consists of experimentation activities, artwork creation, documentation and publication. The report writing consists of literature study or literature review which relate to the research. In the process, both activities (studio work and report writing) influence each other. The result of the literature study is used to help explain, read, and evaluate the created artworks. On the other hand, developments taking place and findings discovered during the creative process of the artwork is used as considerations and input for developing the writing.

To achieve the research objectives mentioned above, the research focuses its literature study on theories and scientific data related to traditional ceramics, vessels, *kendi* and *Bizen* pottery. Investigation on philosophy and values of traditional vessels is done through the investigation on the definition, historical background and development. Data are obtained from several literary works and literary sources such as books, journals, catalogs, archives, internet data, documentation, and other literary sources relevant to the research objectives.

In studio work, several activities are done comprising experimentation (material preparation, forming, firing), artwork creation, documentation (recording and data collection during the studio work process, consisting, among others, sketches, photographs, firing journals, and all data/records related to the artworks), publication and evaluation. In addition to the research report, research results are presented in the form of completed artworks. In the creative process, ideas on forms are developed on studies of *kendis*. Simultaneously, the use of material and techniques are based on the knowledge of *Bizen* pottery traditions, which include the traditional firing process using the *noborigama* kiln. Publication is done through regular research progress presentations, participation in exhibitions and ceramic workshops, including solo exhibitions and participation in ceramic competitions both at national and international levels.

Systematically, the report is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 consists of analysis on traditions in the context of ceramic art comprising definition, history and development of ceramic art concerning traditional vessels. Chapter 2 discusses theories about vessels in the scope of ceramic art comprising analysis on the definition of the vessels' place in ceramic art, and several visual aspects related to aesthetic and expressive concepts. Chapter 3 comprises the explanations related to the meanings of the values of traditional vessels and reviews of *kendi* and *Bizen* pottery traditions. Chapter 4 discusses the artwork, the making process, and explanation on the concepts about the artwork.

ⁱ Christopher Frayling. 1993. *Research in Art and Design*. London: Royal College of Art. p. 5.

I. Ceramic and Tradition

1.1 Defining Tradition within Ceramic Art

- **The Traditional Ceramic**

The investigation of the meaning of tradition in this research acts as a theoretical review of the concept of tradition in the field of ceramic art to explain the range and limitation of the research area. Tradition has a broad scope of understanding that can be approached from various perspectives such as ethnography, anthropology, sociology, including art. The term "traditional ceramic" here refers to the sense of conventional ceramic tradition or ceramic practice as a part of tradition within a specific culture scope that still flourishes in line with the emergence of a new tradition. In this section a definitive boundary concerning the meaning of tradition is described ranging from the etymology to a specific understanding within the scope of ceramic art.

The term "tradition" (English) derives from Latin *traditio* (Noun) or *tradere* (Verb) which means to hand over, to surrender, or to deliver. Tradition means simply a *traditum*; it is anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present¹. Tradition can be understood as a culture that ensures enactment of attitudes, ways of thinking, and acts with the past habit includes all aspects of human life, physical, mental and spiritual. It means that what is handed down covers all the material objects, beliefs, ideas, or activities.

Tradition refers to the patterns of beliefs, customs, values, behaviors, and knowledge or skills that are handed down from one generation to the next through a process of socialization within a given population. Tradition lives in the society and is revealed through the language, in the behavior and customs, and inherited by education. A longstanding tradition is known as a cultural tradition; it is a whole of cultural elements which is still forwarded and inherited from previous generations².

In tradition, the process of cultural inheritance which can be ascertained occurs through the process of transfer of knowledge. There are two mechanisms of inheritance of tradition. The first mechanism is the inheritance of the material or physical, through the preservation of objects, artifacts, and order generated by the activities of the previous generation which affects the actions done by the present generations. The second mechanism is the inheritance of ideas or psychological matters through the ability to recall and to communicate. The ability to recall is obtained by developing shared experiences of the present to learning with shared experiences of the past, as well as by recording the history. In this case, the process of inheritance of tradition in

oral form is more restricted than by writing form, both in scope of acceptance or in scope of time³.

Ceramic is the manifestation of physical culture that has existed since ancient times, referring to all clay objects of human creations in the forms of perceptual structure. Ceramic objects can be referred to as an object of tradition when it has gone through the process of inheritance as described above. As an object of tradition, the role of ceramics in the society since ancient times as utilitarian objects, a ritual tools, and entertainment is very important, because it also relates to other cultural elements such as system of religion, system of livelihood, system of art, and system of technology and equipment. Ceramics also serves to shape a certain environment that affects thought patterns and customs of the previous people in accordance with the developed era. Hence, the ceramic tradition can be analyzed by cross disciplines including art, anthropology, sociology, or history.

In the realm of art, the term “traditional ceramic” may refer to the conventional sense, i.e. tradition of ceramic that existed in the past intended to a certain culture. This term is used to describe the status or the identity of ceramic object from a specific local culture. Ceramic is regarded as one of the traditions handed down by the past based on those aspects that support the formation of tradition. Here, the tradition which handed down can be 1) artifacts or ceramic objects made in the past that can still be well identified as a source of knowledge; 2) knowledge or skill of making ceramics with certain technology and forms; 3) raw materials obtained from the surrounding area where proponent of its tradition is settled; 4) activities related to the interests of the use of ceramic objects whether in relation to ritual beliefs, daily needs, or for the benefit of the economy (trading activities).

The objects of traditional ceramic are still widely studied and therefore have undergone many changes and developments in the conceptual level and practical demonstrate how the inheritance of knowledge runs dynamically. It is also associated with efforts of cultural reconstruction and redefinition of cultural values as a continuous evaluation measures for the sustainability of ceramic traditions, including the development of ceramic discourse in the context of art. As expressed by Leopold L. Foulem in his paper titled “The Use of Ceramics History in Contemporary Ceramics” that most vessels are about history or about tradition and that tradition, also deals with history⁴. The knowledge of the past enters into the present through the route of material or physical objects and ideas. The existence of tradition in the present can be interpreted objectively when the object of the past materially be conserved, and can be

interpreted subjectively when the idea from the past is remembered and is embedded in awareness of community members to become part of the culture. In a state of interact with each other, the past affects the present, and becomes the dominant factor for the state of present society, also including the past that was planned or made for a specific purpose, so as to form new traditions.

In many usages of the term “tradition” there are implicit delimitations of the substantive content of tradition. They imply that traditions are “genuine traditions” only if their substantive content is respectful of traditionality; if they are transmitted in oral form rather than in written form; if they are a matter of hearsay and not of established facts; if there is no evidence for their factual assertions and no ratiocination associated with their normative ones; and if their authors or originators are anonymous rather than individually identifiable by name⁵.

The term of pottery tradition is generally used to identify the type of ceramic objects made by certain communities, while the object is called traditional pottery, such as *Bizen* pottery as an object of Japanese pottery tradition. Object of tradition like *Bizen* pottery has a potent historical aspect and the ability to demonstrate specific identity through packaging of its character and quality of material and other supporting elements such as production activity and its use, as well as the manner in ceremonial ritual activities.

The term of pottery provides assumptions about the definition of the container. In fact not all traditional ceramic objects of the past were pot shaped or container shaped, although in almost every culture was dominated by the container objects. The use of the term “ceramic” in “traditional ceramic” is intended to accommodate the identification of ceramic objects that consist of containers and non-containers such as figurines or even the architectural objects.

In ceramic art discourse, the issue of tradition is usually noticed about the history of the origin of a certain tradition of ceramic, materials and production, belief systems, or cultural interaction within the scope of economic or political interests.

Tradition is a part of history. During its development, the concept of tradition also has a relationship with preservation or sustainability of culture and cultural change, so it is not only approachable by the elements of culture, but also by the historical process, social reproduction and social change in the population concerned society. The objects of traditional ceramic were made and used by its proponent communities for various interests, from utilitarian objects to a medium of expression. A proponent community of tradition is not constant, as in the case of the object of tradition itself. This community is always going to change at all levels of its internal

complexity, such as economic change, politic, and culture in the macro level, while at the micro level, there is a change in community interaction and individual behavior. As stated by Edward Shils, that a society is a "trans-temporal" phenomenon. It is not constituted by its existence at a single moment in time. It exists only through time. It is temporally constituted⁶. A relevance of community and time in the context of these changes show that the existence of community is influenced by the sources of the past events and influence the potential existence of community in the future. That process shows that the past phase correlates with the present phase in terms of causality, and the present phase is a requirement of causality that determines the next phase. In relations to tradition, a relation of community change process within the limits of the past and the present is the basis of a conceptual of tradition.

- **The Role of Tradition in Ceramic Art Practice**

Investigation of the role of tradition in ceramic art practice requires the identification some of some terms associated with a ceramic object that has boundary territory in the art field. It is necessary in an effort to define the tradition and re-examine it in a more meaningful context, by putting that meaning into the social and historical perspective, especially in the development of ceramic art practice.

The first is the term "tradition". As already described in the previous section, that the concept of tradition is understood as a cultural continuity in social attitudes and institutions. In this case, the boundary of culture refers to the traditional activity within a specific community which possesses it, both in the historical context as well as in practical development. The traditional activity in ceramic world is associated to the characteristic of "traditional" that is attached to the object of creation or the subject (the maker).

This ceramic executor or maker is more often referred to as a "potter", who notably works in the utilitarian mode. The term potter is rather understood in the context of crafts associated with the craftsman. Although in its development this term is distinguished by the term artist potter, which is emphasized in a sense of the person who is oriented on two tendencies i.e. traditional pottery or utilitarian objects and non-utilitarian or non-functional objects.

The last term is "pottery" denoting the product of potter, referring to pots or vessels made in utilitarian mode. Identified within the concept of art, the term "pottery" is generalized into a more generic term, ceramics, referring to the objects of clay which also engage non-container objects including sculptural figures and architectural products. The term "ceramics" is paired

with the term "ceramist" or "ceramic artist". The extension of the term also occurs in line with the rise of ceramic discourse, fine art versus crafts, yielding the term "artist potter". The traditions imposed by function are almost a genetic blueprint for pottery, and sustained effort is required to override this. Even non-functional work produced from the twentieth century onwards often echoes, translates and questions the idea of a vessel or container⁷.

From the point of closeness between tradition and craftsperson or artist potter, it can be investigated what the role of tradition is in this relationship. The shapes and techniques of traditional pottery represent more than nostalgia for a way of life long since past. It can be read as the traces of struggle of predecessors in an attempt to survive by expressing and communicating through their handworks, their deepest and most profound insights into the human conditions. These shapes and techniques are not only valuable but also indispensable, because they are part of a visual language that allows us as modern artists to express our ideas and feelings in a way that would be impossible without them. Their loss would impoverish our art and reduce it, in the name of being modern, to nothing more than a trendy, fashion-conscious commercial pursuit⁸. Even in the most primitive of cultures, one finds pots so exotic and stylized in their embellishment that he/she must accept that the idea of connoisseurship, of emphasizing the "art" of pot, not only has existed for thousands of years but has existed in a manner of some sophistication. Such particular expression was undoubtedly codified through the ritual use of pots into "academies" of taste as elaborate as our own. It is this desire to assume aesthetic responsibility (by both makers and viewers) and to refine a visual language that gives man one of his most direct and unconscious forms of communication⁹.

The tradition acts as a provider of language expression conveyed through the form, surface, or making activity of pottery objects. In this case, the modern artist acts as a perceiver, who perceives that language, exploring its depths, and seeks to find his/her own voice inside that language by creating meaning and communicating feelings inside the constraints of a language which is precisely what keeps a tradition alive and makes it viable. A triumphant pot may combine such a cultural echo with other resonances of reality, and maybe of other phenomena, by means of the variety and coherence of its forms. The basic pot concept can establish a kind of a priori unity for any ceramic work¹⁰.

1.2 The Continuity of Traditional Ceramic

- **The Emergence of Studio Pottery**

The term studio pottery is used to cover the scope of ceramic activities which can be defined as ceramic objects made largely by hand, by individuals or by a small group of makers working together in a team under studio conditions. One of the major characteristics of studio pottery is a primary concern for the inherent quality of material and a sound understanding of the techniques and processes required to enable creative ideas to be expressed. Unlike potters of the past, who produced pots and other ceramic objects to meet specific needs and requirements of the society within which they lived, modern studio potters do not fill any essential role. Their work is not purchased out of necessity but is seen as having artistic value, which give it a unique status reflecting the individuality of the maker(s).

The emergence of studio pottery has begun since the end of the nineteenth century and continued to grow until the mid twentieth century, influenced by the arts and crafts movement, a rediscovery of traditional artisan pottery and art pottery, and the establishment of Bauhaus in Germany under guidance of Walter Gropius with the idea of combining art and technology and emphasis on industry and individual objects. Studio potters sometimes known as artist potters are those working with clay as a "medium of artistic expression". Commencing little more than a century ago, and yet within this brief span, virtually all processes have investigated the ancient and reinterpreted for modern audiences.

Stimulated by wares imported from the Far East in the second half of the nineteenth century, artists in France, notably August Daleherche, Theodore Deck, Ernest Chaplet, and Jean-Charles Cazin, started to experiment with pottery-making. In England the four Martin Brothers produced individual stoneware pottery, much of which was salt-glazed, while William Morgan made highly coloured earthenwares based on Hispano-Moresque wares and those of the Middle East. Only in the 1920s did studio potters in Britain such as Bernard Leach and Michael Cardew start looking to indigenous slip-decorated red earthenwares for inspiration¹¹.

Bernard Leach (1887-1979) is one of leading trends in British studio pottery in the 20th century along with others such as Charles Vyse (1882-1971), William Staite Murray (1881-1962), Dora Billington (1890 – 1968), and Michael Cardew (1901-1983). He is then well-known as the “Father of British studio pottery”. In 1940 he published “A Potter’s Book” and enthusiastically received by many as the potter’s bible. In 1955 this book was also published in Japanese version. In this book, he argued that a pot, in order to be good should be a genuine

expression of life, and however, it implies sincerity on the part of the potter and truth in the conception and execution of the work¹². His works combine Western techniques with Eastern aesthetics and it can be said that he was successful in his work because his work was immersed in both cultures over the course of his life. Leach took most of his forms from English pottery, but in his neutral colors, simple decorations and relaxed compositional arrangements, he drew on the Japanese tradition. In Japan, his image is that of an artist with a strong connection to the *Mingei* movement of Soetsu Yanagi (1889–1961) and others (Shoji Hamada (1894-1978), and Kawai Kanjiro (1890-1966). While in England, he has a dual image, one of an individual artist expressing his own ideas, and the other of a potter rooted in the world of industrial pottery¹³.

In America, most of artist potters are much influenced by the East styles and its Oriental Philosophy. Some have adopted the approach emerging studio pottery movements in Britain and Japan. The first contact of American potters with Oriental Philosophy was through Leach's "A Potter's Book". Then followed the 1950 coast to coast lecture tour and its successor in 1953, when Bernard Leach was accompanied by Shoji Hamada and Soetsu Yanagi, that marked the genesis of American potters' affair with Japan¹⁴. Some of the influenced artist potters related to the emergence of studio potter in America include Peter Voukos, Charles Fergus Binns, Otto and Vivica Heino, Warren MacKenzie, Paul Soldner, and Beatrice Wood. The American-based ceramics historian, Garth Clark, describes the position early 1950s of American pottery that the dominant influence was the impact of Japanese pottery and *Zen* Buddhist theories that accompanied it. He also acknowledges the influence of *Zen* concepts of beauty on American potters who broke with the formalist traditions of European ceramics. Through Japanese pottery the Californian potters glimpsed a new value, based on risk and expression. They saw new forms of expression in the subtle asymmetry, in the simplicity, and in the often random, abstract decoration of the wares of the tea ceremony¹⁵.

The emergence of studio pottery suggests that the existence of tradition through its pottery objects still continues. The development of ceramic art which is increasingly widespread in new various approaches of thinking, conceptualization, techniques, or interdisciplinary will not make the existence of the pottery as a vital object in the field of ceramic art decrease, or disappear. In fact, the history of contemporary pottery is a history of the pot as a vehicle for expression. As long as ceramic art deals with this expression, then the existence of the pot as a tradition will remain present.

- **The Influence of Japanese Pottery Tradition**

The development of Japanese ceramic art shows how tradition undergoes a transformation in modern society. Modernization of Japanese ceramics has occurred since the early decades of the 20th century which was started by the emergence of *Mingei* (folk crafts movement) initiated by Soetsu Yanagi, Shoji Hamada, and Kawai Kanjiro. The term *mingei* (folk craft) means “people’s art” was a new word coined in the middle 1920’s by Yanagi and his fellow enthusiasts. They used it to refer to works of handicraft produced, for the most part, by unknown craftsmen for use by ordinary people in their everyday lives—works, that is made by people for the people¹⁶. This term chiefly refers to handicrafts of pre-industrial periods.

Most of famous ceramic artists known as the “Masters” in Japan are a traditional potter. In Japan, certain artworks, structures, craft techniques and performing arts are considered by the Japanese government to be a precious legacy of the Japanese people, and are protected under the Japanese Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. This law also identifies people skilled at traditional arts as “Living National Treasure” or “*Ningen Kokuhō*” and encourages the preservation of their craft. These people are the forerunners of preservation and development of Japanese the traditional arts not only for the people of Japan, but also for the international community.

A special complication of the polarity arises when potters in a sophisticated culture adopt a moral-aesthetic role and swim against the current of sophisticated taste, pursuing a cult of return to ‘the essential nature of material’. This, in fact, imposes a further layer of sophistication upon a ceramic culture; for those who follow this kind of aesthetic always regard themselves as, in some sense, an elite. This phenomenon was well exemplified by the Japanese ceramics made for the tea-ceremony from the later sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Their example was followed by many art-potters in twentieth century Europe, some of whom were inspired by Bernard Leach, who was himself trained in Japan in the tea ceremony aesthetic. This aesthetic was, in fact, based upon a Buddhist theory of simple directness and a cult of poverty, with a strong moral bias against any display of wealth¹⁷.

The 1950s is the early of Japanese influence in America. At this time, Soetsu Yanagi, an aesthetician and the founder of the Japanese folk craft movement; Shoji Hamada, a mature potter of *Zen* sensibilities; and Bernard Leach, their friend and colleague made a three-month tour of the United States in 1952. These three greatly admired the unstudied imperfections of folk pottery; their work involved hand-thrown pieces, rugged stoneware clays, spontaneous

brushwork, and straightforward utility. These standards were antithetical to the clean, slip-cast art pottery of previous decades, and they gave new direction and commitment to many young American potters¹⁸.

The *Zen* view of tradition is even more emphatic: without a golden cord of connection with the collective past, all actions are random and meaningless. This is explained by the Japanese crafts philosopher, Soetsu Yanagi, who sees tradition in the Buddhist sense of a “given power” that transcends the individual, the accumulation of all the experiences and wisdom of generations. He also notes that tradition never asks who is enlisting its help. Nor, by implication, would it then question what the individual seeks to do with this resource¹⁹. A Japanese technique that has grown popular is *anagama*, the name for both the technique of firing and the wood-burning kiln in which the work is fired. This technique creates pieces with crusty textures, a result of the accumulation of wood ash on the surface of the pot.

The significance of historical work from Japan does not lie in its use as a formal prototype. The real value exists in its ability to reveal the aesthetic potential and importance not only of pottery but also of the human activities associated with its function. It is for this reason that these ancient works bear closer scrutiny from potters hoping to create work that will resonate with the same kind of urgency many of the ancient pieces still possess²⁰.

Endnotes:

- ¹ Edward Shils. 1981. *Tradition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. p. 12.
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II. Vessel within Ceramic Art

2.1 Vessel as a Genre

Vessel is a general term used in the pottery world pertaining mostly to hollow objects served as a container. It has supported human's daily lives around the world since ancient times. The term “vessel” has been known since the late 14th century, derived from the Anglo-French *vessel* (*vaisseau*), from Latin *vascellum* (*vasculum*), meaning small vase, urn, or ship. In the context of pottery, the term vessel is associated with a container, a hollow or concave utensil, as a cup, bowl, pitcher, or vase, used for holding liquids or other contents¹.

In Japanese, the term *vessel* is known as *utsuwa*, which means a hollow utensil (中空器具), a receptacle (入れ物), or a container (容器). Literally, *utsuwa* is a word that describes both the object (which means a vessel) and the character (which means a person's capacity or potential). It is also said from the Chinese character “器” (pronounced “*ki*” in Japan, meaning “vessel”) derived from the word “器量” (pronounced “*ki-ryo*”, meaning charms) and the word “器用” (pronounced “*ki-you*”, meaning dexterity). A *vessel* (*utsuwa*) implies the broadly embracing nature of human beings. Whether in Eastern or Western civilization, a vessel (*utsuwa*) was created to hold an emptiness (*u-tsu*) to be filled, and the word *vessel* was employed as the term signifying areas of human nature and ability².

Vessel has an extremely long and varied history, attached to the history of ceramics during the Upper Paleolithic Ice age (30,000 BC) and to the invention of pottery between the Upper Paleolithic and Neolithic periods (12,000-2,000 BC). Long before the emergence of pottery, human invented the ceramic medium and knew how to fire kilns. According to present knowledge, clay was modeled and fired as early as 27,000 BC for the production of ceremonial fertility objects, the Venus figurines³. The oldest object is known as the *Venus of Dolni Vestonice* (Czech: *Věstonická Venuše*), a small female figurine fired at low temperature found in 1925 in the excavation of a Gravettian Paleolithic settlement in the Moravian basin south of Brno, Czechoslovakia. There are also other figurines near this site such as bears, lions, mammoths, horses, foxes, rhino and owls, and more than 2,000 pieces of burnt clay. This important discovery is the forerunner to the birth of the figurative ceramic as a sculpture-approached genre in ceramic art, adjoining with the genre of vessel.

The origin of vessel has started since the emergence of pottery-making culture in ancient Japanese culture known as *Jomon*. What is presently the earliest well documented pottery in the world was discovered in south-western Japan in 1960 at a cave in Fukui near Nagasaki, inland on

the southern island of Kyushu, and since then at a number of further caves and other sites at widely separated locations⁴. The earliest pottery, called *Jomon*-ware, was made in 10,000 BC, constructed by simple handbuilding techniques of coiling and paddling which required the minimum of tools⁵ (Fig. 2.1.). The term *Jomon*, which means “cord pattern”, was coined by the American archaeologist Edward S. Morse, who in 1867 discovered pieces of the pottery decorated with distinctive impressions of twisted cords⁶.

By a long series of journeys since the beginning above, it can be observed that the presence of the vessel at first was a human effort to adapt the natural environment. The presence of vessel is as an essential point in human civilization associated with human intellectual and concept of technology. The development of vessel could become a reflection of mind, taste and sense preference, from daily routines and rituals activities to become personal expression purposes.

There are two golden chords that run throughout the millennia-long history of ceramic art—the vessel and the figure⁷. From the time since the clay material known as medium for food and ritual, it was a long journey which shaped the history of these two types of ceramics (vessel and figure) became the starting point of thoughts and discourse of modern to contemporary ceramics art today. In other words, the modern ceramics discourse set ceramics on two trends i.e. pots or vessels and ceramic sculptures⁸.

In the 1980s when a conflict and debate between those who made utility pots and those who wanted to make ceramics as an art appeared and became a main discourse in Europe, “vessels” became the designated term for the ceramics as a new art form, and the linguistic shift from “pot” to “vessel” and from “studio pottery” to “ceramics” signaled a shift in ambition⁹. Vessel is used to describe a kind of artwork made by ceramic artists who wanted to differentiate their artistic works from more utilitarian pottery as a conventional form of pot making activity. These ceramics artists used the terms “ceramics” and “vessel” instead of “studio pottery” and “pot” to differentiate their works from strictly functional works.

The launching of the "vessel" signified resistance to this kind of narrow commercialization. Instead, the vessel makers moved in the direction of sculpture and painting and insisted that their art be an arena for critical reflection¹⁰. The critic Peter Schjeldahl wrote in a review of Adrian Saxe (one of American ceramic artist well known for his seductive and outrageous humor objects juxtaposing the Historic and which pressed the question of the utility of his own art in a post-industrial world) where the "vessel" became the "smart pot", as a satire definition which states that "smart pot", referring "vessel" is an academic object posing an imaginary academy

with values of prestige fouling up values of use¹¹. One of the reasons the vessel remains such a powerful genre, even when it no longer specifically addresses its function, is that it often has an overwhelming sense of intimacy, and even, occasionally it offers a “hands-on” experience¹².

The development of vessels as a genre in the discourse of ceramic art practice continues to this day with various issues and approaches. From the late of nineteenth century, it becomes clear that there were two central ideological constructs which have mediated production and characterized its division into types of attitudes towards practice, i.e. the ceramic vessel and the sculptural tendencies¹³. Not only ceramics practitioners (who began their career as an artist with a single medium, ceramic, or those who are referred to as pottery craftsmen or artist potters), but there are also contemporary ceramic sculptors whose reference to traditional vessel forms pushes the medium beyond its association with decoration and utility to explore issues of body, gender, or craft. Here, the vessel explores the association between clay, ceramic forms, and the body which explores the parallels and tension between the body and the vessel.

In contemporary ceramics, it has been made since the beginning of modern ceramics, some artists depart from their reference to traditional vessel forms. They push the medium to explore the issues of ceramics associated with clay, gender, body, space, or even sculptural forms. From the questions of the root of functional vessel as a utilitarian objects (storage vessels, pots, vases), some practitioners began to argue about the issue of medium that is often associated as products of craft. Artists have increasingly turned to clay as a conceptual arena in the tendency to raise the level of ceramic in fine arts paradigm. The artists in vessels are influenced by traditional ceramic objects and their functions, but move it forward by subverting common perceptions of clay and the artists who use it. The basic expression in ceramics is the way the forms of the pot are implicated in their presence a wide range of the spectator’s personal experience. Different traditions operate in different ways, giving weight to different aspects¹⁴. Over the years, the term "vessel" has become less controversial. It has become more and more commonly used as a synonym for pots and containers, although it usually implies an expectation of conceptual concerns that distance objects of this type from the utilitarian connotations of pottery¹⁵.

2.2 The Aesthetics of Vessel

Within the investigation related to the context of the aesthetics of vessel, there are several aspects that can be used as boundaries and considerations which have specific correlations to the

intangible and tangible properties attached to the vessel as an object of art i.e. the aspect of the material and process, form and surface, and symbol.

The aspect of material and process is one of the important aspects in the vessel as object of art. Intentions of the aesthetic of vessels that emphasizes the subject matter (purpose of creation) on the technical aspects and the quality of materials, usually perceive that they can be separated. Clay as a medium with diverse qualities opens up opportunities for artists to exploit a wide range of material qualities up to the limit of technical achievement. This act is not solely aimed only for the sake of achieving skills contentment, but also to the case of expression. The visual quality that is presented by the vessel will shape perceptions and personal experiences which evoke memories of a particular phenomenon. Related to the aspect of material and process, perhaps the most popular example discussed in the discourse of modern ceramic art is the artworks of Lucie Rie, Shoji Hamada, also artists belonging to the next generation like Jennifer Lee.

Material, conceptually, is not limited to "ceramic" (condition after experiencing thermal process), but also extends to the area of "clay" itself which is the essence of ceramic (conditions before experiencing thermal process). In the context of the clay as factual object, the clay material encourages artists as makers to exploit the nature of the medium through its materiality, its conspicuous plasticity, its tactility (in the sense of touch as one of the forms of communication), and its insistent qualities of surface (including the shape, density, or fragility)¹⁶.

Jane Perryman using the term "naked clay", as a category of ceramic objects that uses "unglazed surface" approach in the process of creation. According to Perryman, one of the categories of naked clay is the objects with "clay marked by fire" approach that uses a touch of flame during the firing process to bring out certain effects on the unglazed surface. Fire marks on an unglazed surface have an instant resonance with ancient pottery and so express qualities of timelessness¹⁷. Here, a Japanese firing method can be used as an appropriate example. A Japanese wood firing style as an "aesthetic" had a historical precedent in the late-16th-century, where it was made with the kind of self-conscious artifice usually associated with modern art. This firing process is still culturally and aesthetically important in modern Japan, inspiring many artists in Europe, and especially American artists who were looking for a historical premise within the language of ceramic art for their own aesthetic inclinations and philosophical concerns¹⁸. Ceramics emerge from clay and fire, and the artists strive to unite these two elements, to work their will upon them, and to express their creative vision through them. All of the clay's

characters and the fire's behavior encounter surprises which appeared on the surface of fired vessels.

The material rules of ceramics produce an expanded envelope of an elastic material, and that is all there is to see. In the “undecorated” pot, the only specific thing to see is a contour or silhouette; it really has no particular identity except its edges. This at once separates vessel ceramics from a sculpture. A sculpture is constantly being articulated so that we look into it and we see it as more than silhouette. Ceramic, on the other hand, has an enormously long and significant tradition of painting into that interior surface so that we have information about the shape of the pot, its character, its form, its degree of vitality somewhere besides simply at its contour¹⁹. Ceramic material that consists of four main elements (earth, water, fire, and air) is the most appropriate material to represent the languages of nature. The qualities of handmade-touch connect human to nature. Capturing the whole process of making, it is a collaboration between human and nature. The clay is earth. Human mixes the earth to become clay, shaping and drying it until it is ready for firing. The process of firing teaches about the role of fire as an important element. It is extremely important to advance with technology, but it is just as important to stay connected to cultural roots surrounding us. The ceramist may be instructed and excited by ideas that animate other mediums, but he or she transforms them into the special terms of his or her own. And (despite the phenomenal extension, during the past thirty or so years, of the range and seriousness of the messages that clay could be employed to deliver) clay has a uniqueness, and that uniqueness is primarily a matter of its materiality and its plasticity²⁰.

One of the oldest and the most direct techniques for making ceramic vessels is hand-building, a method joining together coils or rings of clay²¹. This technique has become one of the approaches which attracts many artists exploit and use in the manufacturing process as well as the conceptual background. In the context of tradition, the forming method is also related to the socio-historical background and geographical scope related to identity as part of certain culture, tradition, or belief.

Ceramics is an artistic expression which involves a unity between a clay form and its surface treatment which cannot be separated out, and it cannot be said that one is more important than the other²². The aspect of form and surface is an extension of perception of a maker as the way of disclosure of ideas related to a specific theme or message. It still needs to adhere to the traditional character of ceramics as implying the image of the containing. The pots will lose their meanings if they do not have this double aspect: first, of containing and isolating a realm of

space, maybe even sanctifying it; and second, of exhibiting outward forms, which define the container as a special kind of presence in the world, no mere inert object²³.

Hollowness is the nature of the vessel which is represented by the area of the wall. In fact, the aesthetics of vessel is strongly based on the existence of a cavity in a form of container. For a vessel is as much defined by the negative space in and around it, as the skin of ceramic itself. This skin is a sort of negotiation between inside and outside, between solid and fluid, and where they intersect. A vessel embodies something and nothing and is an effortless three-dimensional manifestation of form and formlessness²⁴. Ceramists is often purely formalist, developing relationships of parts or colours for their own inherent satisfaction, rather than for the expression of an external meaning. These relationships of parts typically play on a spectrum of unity or disunity, probably because of that capacity of form and surface to operate independently. It also often incorporates, as a sort of subtext, the history of decorative or utilitarian form, conveying multicultural references²⁵.

The aesthetic of vessel as an object of expression is also demonstrated by its activity in ceremonial or ritual. In this case the quality of aesthetic refers to the disclosure expression through symbolic approach. At this level, the consideration of symbolic use becomes a basis or a main purpose of creation. A symbolic need by using the forms of vessel evolves in the way and discloses purposes. The vessel acts as a sort of pulse-taking: where are we, what do we value, what are we thinking? The vessel is persistent and keeps being made down through the ages, mute, and compliant but articulates in a way it reflects us back to ourselves²⁶.

2.3 Expression of Vessel in Ceramic Art Practice

- **Thematic Approach**

Vessel, as one of major themes in the field of ceramic art continues to evolve. The dynamics of change occur not only at the level of practices, but also at the level of concepts. Various discussions and debates about the issues within ceramics discourses impact on the emergence of several movements in the ceramics worlds, from the discourse of tradition, modern, art-crafts, post-modern, to the new tendencies in contemporary territory. However, at each stage of the changes, the tendencies of the vessel forms still exist and continue to be explored. In the certain context the tendency of the vessel can be read in the conventional level by emphasizing the formal aspects, but in another context, this conventional power becomes the keyword of the essence of ceramic itself.

One of the major themes which is most inherent to the physicality aspect of vessel is the containment. The concepts brought around this theme depart from the conventional definition of ceramics as a container object, a hollow receptacle²⁷. Within this conventional sense, vessels usually have a potent relationship with their function as a container. While retaining references to the container, many artists make an artwork that takes on more metaphorical or symbolic qualities where the vessels act as a signifier, container of meaning and ideas²⁸. The issue of containment explores the relationship territory between the pot and the object, between human and object, which is occasionally associated with the body, human life and death, or about the intimacy properties of the container itself.

Next is the organic abstractions approach. Some artists adapt this approach to express the idea where form can occur or develop gradually, without being forced or contrived²⁹. This theme is achieved in different ways. Some artists emphasize the quality or characteristic of clay to evoke intriguing geology by exposing the color quality of soil and rock on the surfaces, or building a vessel with references to both nature and the human forms. There are also artists who push at the limit of natural form by exploring the quality of making techniques such as throwing and firing. While others try to explore the qualities of form in order to evoke the essence of natural form and experiences with the responded landscape or create a still life composition.

Patterns and decorations are the idea of clay as a canvas as a starting point for some artists in the making process of their artworks. This approach explores the relationship between form and surface treatment as important considerations. The techniques are achieved by using coloring materials such as glaze, stain, colored slip, terra sigillata, colored clay, or decal³⁰.

Another approach is by exploring the relationship between ceramic form and architecture³¹. For many artists, the correlation between buildings and vessels may be more encoded, but can be a fascinating aspect of their work. The geometrical pattern which is applied to the construction of vessel form manipulates the volume and shape of vessel by assembling parts of basic shapes, or creating intriguing arrangements of lines, forms, and structures, in which all can be associated with the strong architectural concept.

The next important approach is the expression of aesthetic primitivism by using a primal vessel forms or techniques. The search for what might be called “real” pottery, that is one perceived to be deeply rooted in tradition and so having both a fundamental relationship with the past while also being relevant to today, has been the concern of potters keen to explore the qualities of clay and fire as they interact at high temperature³². Most artists who work in the

realm of tradition as a potent reference deliberately chose the vessel as their vehicle of expression, exploring a wide range of aesthetic possibilities of container forms which implied a certain messages evoking a historical-spiritual relationship of human and clay. All artists engaged with this approach place their awareness to their cultural background by referring to the forms of traditional works and dragging it to actual interpretation in order to respond to life as they see and experience it.

Related to this research theme, the ways of expression with tradition and historical approach is used by some artists as a starting point the idea. Generally it is related to the background or biography of the artists, such as their native tradition, or source of traditional knowledge which is gained from the experiences and from the very influential surroundings. Some of the artists who use this approach include Magdalene Odundo, Lawson Oyekan, Jane Perryman, and one of Japanese famous artist Ryuichi Kakurezaki.

Magdalene Odundo was born in 1951 at Nairobi, Kenya. She studied at the Surrey Institute of Art and Design and completed M.A. at the Royal College of Art. Her sculptural vessels are highly collectable and she has had a number of significant international exhibitions. The forms recall the vessels of ancient Egypt and those produced in parts of Africa, but she gives them an elegant twist, introducing an intriguing asymmetrical quality³³. Through hand building and burnishing technical approaches, struggling with her personal identity, experiences, and intellectual, she successfully brings these ancient techniques to the contemporary world (Fig. 2.2.). Her artworks endeavour to address issues related to community, cultural identity, and others, which related and evolved from her research into vessels associated with ceremonies and rituals for rites of passage at birth, initiation, marriage and death generally performed in African societies³⁴.

Lawson Oyekan was born in London 1961. He grew up in his parents' native Nigeria, but in 1983 he returned to England to continue his studies at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design and at London and Royal College of Art, London. Regarding Oyekan's artworks, he used sources from the tradition of Longuda people in northern Nigeria. In the ritual of Longuda religious, the people used a small pot known as "*kwandalowa*" for the purpose of antidote or healing of diseases, where the diseases are transferred from the human body to the pots. He has developed a potent spiritual and physical relationship to his material through his heritage of one of the richest pottery cultures in the world. The collective energy of this heritage has enabled his work to communicate some of the struggles of humanity and the paradoxes of human condition³⁵.

One of his famous artworks titled “Healing Being” successfully won the Grand Prix Award of the First World Ceramic Biennale in Korea in 2001. This artwork is a terracotta monolithic sculpture, characterized by surfaces often left dry and unglazed, measuring 6 feet and 7 inches in height (Fig. 2.3.).

Jane Perryman is known internationally for developing the ancient and traditional processes of smoke firing and transforming them into a contemporary art form. She combines studio work with writing and her books are published in the UK, America, France and Germany. She explored the vessel as an abstract form, developing it into sculptural pieces alluding to the timeless vessel, while simultaneously reflecting the urban structures of buildings, walls and bridges. The sculptural work explores tension and balance between pieces that can be repositioned into new arrangements and compositions. Her artwork is a kind of simplification of approach to form and firing by focusing on hand building and smoke firing (Fig. 2.4.). Her work is inspired by the philosophy of the Hindu tradition, known as *yoga*, which explores the element of ambiguity and the dynamic of opposites. The Sanskrit word *yoga* means union of body and mind, which could be translated in ceramic terms as balance or the unity between form and surface, between inside and outside³⁶.

Ryuichi Kakurezaki is one of *Bizen* artists, well known for his artworks which are marked “New Heisei of *Bizen* Pottery” or “New-Aged *Bizen*”. He was born in 1950 on a small island that is part of the Goto Islands of Nagasaki Prefecture. After high school he studied design at the Osaka University of Arts, where he graduated in 1973. Before working with clay, he worked as a graphic designer. This designer background served him well when it came to re-thinking the forms that lay dormant in *Bizen*’s clay. After studying with a few teachers, namely *Bizen*’s current Living National Treasure Jun Isezaki, he established his own studio in 1986, yet not before being accepted into numerous prestigious exhibitions while still in training. His artworks brought a revolutionary approach to forming pottery³⁷. He has given *Bizen* a fine-arts mentality. In the connoisseurs world of pottery collecting, pieces from the Momoyama period are most prized, for that was Japan's Renaissance years that saw the crystallization of many of Japan's artistic triumphs. His artwork has a wholly original shape despite being made with the time-honored *Bizen* materials, and techniques (Fig. 2.5.). While among achieved through the artist, this form resulted from the opposite of the traditional practice of “*kama-makase*”, or “leaving it up to the kiln”³⁸.

A kind of approach and perspective to the vessel determines how it will be executed, where it will be positioned, and ultimately leads to how it will be perceived. Vessels can be presented in other contexts, which will retain their associations with the domestic environment but may also indicate how they can enhance and animate a space. Vessels can be photographed in domestic contexts rather than isolated in the regulation fading out background.³⁹.

- **The Language of Vessel**

As a form of human-made artifacts with an aesthetic or creative component, a vessel certainly has a specific meaning or purpose that can be read through its visual language. Here, the “language” is intended as a method of communication or act of expression through the visual of vessel. In other words, the form/mode of expression allows the maker or observer to discover the inherent meaning behind the vessel form.

The language of vessel is the basic of expression as the way the forms of vessel implicate in their presence a wide range of the spectator’s personal experiences. The language of vessel can be read in three ways, i.e. as a document, as a metaphor, or as an object of ritual. As a document, the vessel is a physical record of the process that produces it. As a metaphor, the vessel yields insight into the human condition. As an object of ritual, the vessel operates within the realm of day-to-day experience, enriching perception by diverse experiential means: visual, haptic, intellectual, sensual, emotional, and kinesthetic⁴⁰.

The observation of vessel language from the perspective "documentation" invites the viewer to approach the area of reflection. The meaning of document here is everything which may be preserved or represented in order to serve as evidence for some purposes. This document serves as a representation of a person's thinking by means of symbolic marks. Or it can be said that the vessel acts as a medium that records various of actions, thoughts, and experience of the author.

In the vessel, this language is conveyed through its material. Every vessel, out of issues about goodness or beautifulness, may constitute a record of what goes on in the studio between the maker and the material. The elements of earth, fire, water, and air are controlled and transmuted by the maker, creating interactions between the tangible and intangible properties of human minds and experiences. Every mark left on an object is a record of decision made and an action taken by the hands that performed.

Containment, as a conceptual aspect of vessel, is one of intangible properties of the object (besides other properties like materiality, tactility, intimacy, domesticity, ornament, or utility)

that may be explored in a level of metaphoric sense⁴¹. The essence of the vessel, when acting as a means of metaphor, is its capacity to share the spirit of creativity with its ultimate audience, user, or holder. It is about the spirit of creative process. For example, the quality of unglazed vessels could represent unbroken tradition pottery production that reminds of the body, of the landscape of certain geographical references, of the discourse of gender (socio-historical aspects of women and pottery production), or of the concept of human and space. In another context, the vessel is used as a metaphor related to the cycle of human life—birth, marriage, regeneration, death. This is the most attached metaphorical sense in the embodiment of the vessel as a manifestation of human interpretation of their essence of life.

The language of vessel in the perspective of ritual can be interpreted as the repetitious activity of making and a self-conscious awareness of the object. Ritual itself is a way of moving through an activity to bring a heightened awareness of the actions that form it. In many preliterate societies, ritual is prescribed and carries within it a collective memory of some important aspect of culture. Thus, cultural meaning can be carried from one generation to the next through a series of specific activities performed by members of a group⁴².

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- ³⁹ Emmanuel Cooper. 2002. *Ends and beginnings*. In interpreting ceramics issues 2/2002. Retrieved from: <http://www.interpretingceramics.com/issue002/>
- ⁴⁰ M. Anna Farriello and Paula Owen (Ed.). 2005. *Objects and Meaning: New Perspectives on Art and Craft*. United States of America: Scarecrow Press, Inc. p. 149.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 156.
- ⁴² *Ibid.* p. 161.

III. Reviewing Traditional Vessels

3.1 Reading the Values of Traditional Vessels

This chapter is a review of traditional vessels as a source of reference in the process of creation. Two main subjects taken as a reference are the *kendi* (a traditional Indonesian vessel), and the *Bizen* Pottery or *Bizenyaki* (a Japanese Traditional pottery). Both are read into the frame of aesthetics and values related to the concept of vessels in the realm of ceramic art. Related to the creative process of artworks, this review is further intended to understand the object of the tradition as part of the process of maturing the idea and as trigger for development of overall research and creation process.

The Master Hamada Shoji in the introduction to the catalog of Japan Folk Crafts Museum said that tradition, to use another metaphor, might be likened to an underground supply of water that lies beneath our feet waiting only to be dug for; is it not a supply channeled in over ground from some other sources, but a spring ever welling up from the depths of the earth, a spring that is ancient yet eternally brimming with new life¹. His statement reminds that there are a lot of values that can be extracted from the wisdom of tradition that is able to be used as a source of ideas for reconstructing new values for a new generation in the future on an ongoing basis. Knowledge of the past should bring the values of the past into the present by unnecessarily making it into a guide to action in the future, but to make it as a potential chance for new generations to interpret and appreciate the traditional values in broader contexts.

Every culture has its own context and concept to reveal its expression through vessel forms. Exploring the fundamental characteristics of traditional vessels will open an understanding of how the tradition is embedded in specific social and cultural contexts. Here, the fundamental characteristics are then understood as basic awareness of the values of the traditional vessels, which could be traced from the technical qualities, the personality of the maker whether an individual artists or within a certain communities, the subject matter it represents or symbolizes, the other objects to which it might relate both from the present and the past, and the object's relation to someone's life, experiences, and the knowledge which are brought to the object².

Some of practitioners or contemporary ceramic artists today use their knowledge of the vessel tradition as a potent reference which is read in a different context. The general thrust of their production policies differs, however. Some seek to further enhance traditional techniques while working in places where pottery has been made for centuries, adding refinements in design in the effort to create ever richer works of art. Others strive to free themselves from the fetters of

tradition and create individualistic ceramic wares by pursuing completely new forms adapted to modern lifestyles. Still others place more emphasis on the practical aspects of pottery in contemporary life³.

In this review, there are some awareness and considerations in interpreting the values of traditional vessels as follows:

- The tradition of vessels emerged from the individual experience of human which is thrust by human needs of food and of spiritual activities.
- The tradition of vessels formed a personal and communal relationship that is based on specific interests or contexts such as economic, social, political, etc.
- The Traditional vessel has certain symbols and contains normative and cultural values associated with the socio-anthropology of the communities which own the tradition.
- Vessels can be read as a metaphor of tradition for its qualities which reminder of the "constructedness" of the tradition itself.
- One of disclosure strategies of new ideas can be achieved by borrowing certain symbols or values of conventional traditional vessel, and then be read and used in different contexts or points of view.
- The vessel and its tradition are the essence of ceramic which refers to certain conventions and rules concerning its properties and nature as a basic aspect of its aesthetic values.
- Knowledge of the vessel tradition can be explored through the material, technical, or aesthetic approaches.

3.2 *Kendi*, Indonesian Traditional Vessel

• Historical Background

Archaeological evidence indicates that earthenware objects in Indonesia have been produced since the Neolithic period (around 2000 BC), which is the beginning of the prehistoric period in Indonesia. Prehistoric earthenware from Indonesia mainly consists of simple vessels such as bowls (cylindrical, rounded, and footed), pots (globular and carinated), water vessels with or without spouts, lids, and urns or jars, either cylindrical or globular⁴. By far one of the important objects with its distinctive and unique shape is a spouted water vessel known as a *kendi*.

As one of the traditional objects, *kendi* were made and found throughout the Indonesian archipelago. The existence of *kendi* is not only in Indonesia, but widespread in the mainland of

Southeast Asia, Asia, Middle East, and parts of Europe, however, *kendi* are closely associated with the culture of Southeast Asia. The shape of *kendi* are different from each region and age, which might reflect different tastes and influences of many cultures coming to the region throughout its history⁵.

The name *kendi* has always been associated with the spouted vessel or pouring vessel with a spout on the side but without a handle. While pouring, it is held around its neck. In general the Southeast Asian traditional water vessel has no handle but it might have a spout. This is a unique characteristic of *kendi*.

Until today, the origin of the term *kendi* has not clearly been ascertained. The origin of *kendi's* form is largely speculative, but etymology suggests India as a source. The Malay word *kendi* or *kundi* is believed to be derived from the Sanskrit *kundika* meaning a water vessel⁶. Supposedly the *kendi* originated in India and was transmitted to Southeast Asia and China by traders and religious leaders during its Indianisation in the early years of the Christian era⁷. When Malaya and Indonesia were Islamicised in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the *kundika* as a Hindu and Buddhist ritual vessel must have disappeared. By that time, however, the word had been absorbed into the Malay language (*kendi* or *kundi* in Malaya, *gendi* in Java)⁸.

The *kundika* appears in Hindu iconography as one of the attributes of Brahma and of his Sakti Brahmani, and of Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning, and in Buddhism as an attribute of *Avalokitesvara*. The *kundika* was also carried by Buddhist pilgrims⁹. Some older examples of spouted *kendis* have been discovered in Mesopotamia and Greece. *Kendis* from Mesopotamia are dated 3200 BC, while *kendis* from Greece are dated to 2500 BC. The Indians did not copy the spout of the Mesopotamian prototype which is similar to a bird's beak. The spout of Indian *kendis* is straight as a pipe. The Indian *kendis* were made in India around the second millennium BC, and continued to be made into historic times. While in Indonesia, *kendi* appears to be already known in the 9th century in Central Java. The reliefs on the *Kamadathu* gallery of the Borobudur temple (800 AD) show both *kendi* and *kundika* forms¹⁰.

The differences of *kendi* and *kundika* are the shape and the way to use them (Fig. 3.1.a,b.). The *kendi* has little relation to the *kundika* except in having two openings, the mouth and the spout. *Kundikas* are mostly filled from the spout at the side of the body and pours from the mouth which is shaped as a narrow pipe, while in general *kendis* are filled through the mouth and pours from the spout¹¹.

Kendi became one of the standard export types made in China since East Asian markets. *kendis* might be used exclusively in Indonesia and were only brought to Europe as private possessions. The fact that *kendis* appear often in Dutch seventeenth century paintings show its popularity in those times as an exotic object from the Orient¹². Japanese trade and communication with the Indonesian archipelago were quite insignificant in the early seventeenth century and were limited to northern Kalimantan (Borneo), northern Sulawesi (Celebes), and the northern Maluku (Moluccas). During that time Indonesia had already established trade relations with China, Vietnam, and Thailand which were the main ceramic producing centers. The first intensive trade relations with Japan were initiated by the Dutch East Indian Company or *Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie* (VOC), which found in 1602 and obtained from the Dutch Government the monopoly in the trade with South East Asia¹³.

Especially in Indonesia, *kendis* have a different name in each region or culture. In Java they are called *kendi*, *kundi*, *gundi*, or *kamandalu*¹⁴. In Lombok Island they are called *ceret* or *cerubuk*¹⁵. In Tapanuli, North Sumatera, they are known as *labotaneh*, meaning pumpkin made from clay. In Batak country, they are called *kandi*, in Bali *kundi* or *caratan*, and in Sumba Island *puak*. In South Sulawesi *busu*, in Aceh *geupet bahlaboh* and in Lampung *hibu*¹⁶. In Indonesian language, the name *kendi* is used. Therefore, this paper refers to the term *kendi*, while the term *kundika* is used to describe the characteristic of form.

The use of the term “earthenware” in this paper refers to Indonesian traditional pottery objects, including *kendi*, which are made from low-fire clay. In Indonesian language it is called “*gerabah*” or “*tembikar*”, mostly with its unglazed quality. In modern ceramics, earthenware is one of a classification of clay or pottery types besides stoneware and porcelain. In this context, classification of pottery types is based on body material, not on the glaze, and the primary difference is the temperature at which the wares are fired. Earthenware is a low-fire clay bodies (range of temperatures 800-1050°C), the second is stoneware or mid-fire clay bodies (temperature of 1050-1250 °C), and a third is porcelain or high-fire clay bodies (temperature 1280-1300 °C)¹⁷.

Earthenware is the earliest type of pottery made by mankind. It is usually unglazed and the colour varies widely from shades of grey to buff to reddish-orange. The texture is coarse and porous so it is easily broken, which is probably why so little early earthenware has survived. In the Japanese language, the term "earthenware" is called “*doki* 土器”, which means fired at about 600°C - 900°C, and is usually a reddish or buff color¹⁸. Actually, in Japan the term earthenware

is not widely recognised, since generally a mid-high fire clay bodies (e.g., stoneware or porcelain) is used. Earthenware, however, were used and known from the Jomon until the Yayoi period. After the Yayoi period, the term *doki* was not used, with stoneware being the next stage in the development of fired clay. In the Japanese language, the term "stoneware" is called "*sekki* 炻器". This term was introduced in 1909 as a translation of "stoneware", but not widely used¹⁹. The characteristics of stoneware vary more than any other type of pottery because of the natural materials used. Stoneware is usually glazed. The clay is usually more complex than earthenware, with substances added to improve it. The colour varies from buff to orange to light and dark shades of grey, depending on the clay used and the firing conditions. It is fired at a higher temperature than earthenware, making it a harder and more durable material.

Based on that classification, anthropologists classify Indonesian pre-modern pottery objects as earthenware. Some literature also mentions by the term "terracotta" with reddish color characteristic. Terracotta is derived from the Italian, *terra* means earth/soil and *cotta* means baked. Archaeological evidences suggest that the Indonesian pottery objects from the prehistoric period until the end of the classical period were made of unglazed earthenware²⁰.

The use of glaze has been known and developed in Indonesia since the colonial period which is used to produce the imitation of Chinese and European pottery for international trading. All glazed ceramics were found from the historical times (Indonesian Classical period) in some ancient sites in Indonesia are objects imported from several countries including China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, and Myanmar²¹. Specifically on items that are used for ritual tools, the use of unglazed earthenware is related to the concept of spiritual symbolic. Therefore, until today, although the technology of glazes has evolved, the traditional ritual pottery is still made from unglazed earthenware.

The Indonesian earthenware objects are classified into vessel and non-vessel groups. Meanwhile, based on the functions it's become utilitarian and ceremonial (Fig. 3.2.a,b.). According to this division, it shows that *kendi* is a multifunctional vessel either for daily use or for ritual tools.

In Indonesia, *kendi* has been used as a utilitarian and ritualistic vessel. As a utilitarian object, *kendi* has been used as a drinking water vessel. It is noteworthy that Southeast Asian cultures, including Indonesia, do not recognise the cup as a drinking tool. For this purpose, the *kendi* is used by pouring the water directly into the mouth through the spout without touching the tip of

spout (Fig. 3.3.). The method allows *kendi* to be shared hygienically by many people without using a cup.

Meanwhile, the use of a *kendi* as a ritual tool is extremely diverse. Indonesia consists of many ethnic groups with different traditions and cultures. *Kendis* similarly have different ritual functions and meanings among different ethnic group. The role of *kendi* in ritual tradition since the Neolithic period evolved significantly when the Hindu-Buddhist cultures entered Indonesia, known as the Indonesian Classical period (around 400–1500 AD). The existence of cultural products such as *kendi* in the classical period flourished in line with the concept of cosmology developed by the influences of Hindu and Buddhism religions.

The use of *kendi* as a ritual tool continued to evolve in line with the development of Islamic culture in Indonesia, at the end of the classical period and the beginning of the Islamic period Indonesia (1500-1900 AD). Islamic influence has changed the ritual aspect of *kendi*, such as the shape, the symbolic meaning, and also its ritual practice. The entry of modern culture in the next phase caused the use of *kendi* to gradually disappear from daily Indonesian life. Not only in ritual aspects, but also in domestic spaces the use of *kendi* began to be replaced by modern products, such as cups, jugs, bottles, or other drinking water vessels. Today, only a few people in Indonesia use *kendi* in ritual ceremonies, while others are used mostly as interior ornament.

- **Form**

In general this section contains a description of the *kendi* form seeing from morphological perspective. It is an analysis of *kendi* form based on the typology of pottery vessel form. Second is about the anatomy of *kendi* (Structure of *kendi* form). Third is the description of *kendi* forms in several countries and in Indonesia based on historical timeline.

The three major purposes for skillfully created objects made of clay are related to architectural, pottery, and ceramic sculpture. The object of *kendi* in this research is specifically oriented towards pottery. Further in this paper we will use the term pot, pottery vessel, or vessel.

Vessel forms continuously evolve in the same way as other objects, leading to the emergence of a variety of forms in each category, or even produce new variants. In ceramic morphology, the categorisation of the types of vessel form can be seen from the structure of relations based on primary variations. Primary variations can be seen from the tendency of form direction which dominates the overall shape, for example, in the group of globular shape. The structure of relations is a kind of typological kin-ship between the objects of pottery vessels. This

structure of relations is one of main factors in the aesthetic of ceramics. It is partly a natural consequence of that interrelationship between hand, material, and intended function, which is the foundation of the transformation image reflected in the techniques²².

Fig. 3.4. is an overview structure classified by morphology. Here, the categorisation of forms is traced from the method of forming techniques. Rawson started with analysing the type-forms from the primal root-form (Primal form). Primal form is a lump of clay with a hole in it, pinched out into a rudimentary container. This primal form evolves into three sub-forms; that is jar, cylinder, and basin.

This diagram does not accurately describe the form of *kendi*, but it can be developed such as logical lines from the primal form. The basic shape of *kendi* is generally globular (belly) to which is added a cylindrical shape (neck) on top that serves as a handle. Technically, belly and neck parts of *kendi* are mostly made separately and then assembled. In this case, the main question is how the form was built. The belly and the neck parts are equally constructed by pulling up and opening out.

Classification of vessel form sometimes encounters problem because of the development of its variant such as the classification of jar. Absolute size or volume criteria are used to differentiate many of the categories of vessel. Based on vessel-shape terminology, a jar is a necked (and therefore restricted) vessel with its height greater than its maximum diameter²³. This classification is based on the principle of classifying vessel shapes by ratios of height to diameter. There is also a jar with diameter approximately 70% of height, which could be classed as a vase or a jar with a narrow neck, called flagon. Classification of pottery used in historical periods branched off into flatware (such as plates) and hollowware (those that enclose their content, such as jar). Whereas, jar is classified into a group of storage or transfer vessel.

The form of *kendi* can be classified in the sub-division of the jar, with its specification of the spout part seen in most *kendi*. In fig. 3.4., the area of the red line is the closest group of *kendi* form.

Vessel form normally consists of several basic parts or components that build the structure of the overall shape. The way that these parts are related to each other, the proportions they are given, their scale in relation to the human being and his hands, and the relation of one part to the others constitute a major element in ceramic expression.

We have always used anthropomorphic terms to designate the different parts of pot, which is seen to be, in some sense, a symbolic analogue of the human body²⁴. Anthropomorphic terms in

this context are a term that put human as a subject. The parts of the vessel forms such as mouth, lip, neck, belly, foot, or shoulder describes how people from earlier were positioning the objects of vessel as a representation of human body. It is not only in the case of objects for ritual (elite pottery) that role as a symbolic act, but also in the domestic objects relating to the role of women. "...many traditions have felt a close metaphorical relationship between their pottery and various functions of the feminine which that culture recognises."²⁵ However, there are also some traditions that are totally unrelated to the issue of the domestic, but rather indicate other symbolic roles.

Vessel form can be described and characterized in a number of ways to explain particular parts and their proportions. In the perspective of anthropology or archeology (Fig. 3.5.a.), most simply, a vessel has three essential components of anatomy. Those are orifice, body, and base²⁶. While in the perspective of aesthetics (Fig. 3.5.b.), the main parts of vessel usually consist of lip or mouth, neck, shoulder, belly, and foot. Moreover, some particular forms also have parts of head, throat, spout, handle, or waist, which can be mentioned in more specific terms.

The orifice or mouth opening of a vessel is also called lip of vessel forms. One of its most important characteristics is its relation to the maximum diameter of vessel. If it is equal to or greater than the maximum diameter, it is described as an unrestricted orifice. If it is less than the maximum diameter, it is called a restricted orifice²⁷. These parts correspond to hollow and flat wares, respectively. Not all vessels have such simple contours, however, often they have complex shapes set off by curves or angles, especially at the orifice. Also, the orifice may be raised and extended into a neck or collar, which affects the proportions of the vessel. A neck is a restriction of the opening of the vessel²⁸. It is a special adaptation of restricted orifice for containing liquids or for particular storage and transfer function²⁹.

The body of a vessel (sometimes called belly) may be defined as the portion between the orifice and base that includes the maximum diameter of the vessel or the region of greatest enclosed volume. Sometimes the point of maximum diameter alone may be called the shoulder³⁰.

Base or foot is a part of the bottom of the vessel form. The base of vessel is important to stability during any use. Generally flat bases are stable, but certain activities may favor other shapes³¹.

Those three vessel components (orifice, body, and base) can be described by their positions or modifications of form. But if the modifications do not distort the primary shapes of the vessels or their proportions, they can be thought of as secondary form variations. Primarily, the

secondary anatomical section of vessel form consists of three kinds: foot applied to the base; handles applied to the body, neck or collar; and spouts applied to the orifice, neck, collar or body³². Spouts are two types, that is the open or jug type and the closed tubular type used on the teapot³³.

The division of vessel anatomy above can also be applied to the form of a *kendi*. In general the form of a *kendi* has two features. One is *kendis* with a spout, and the second is *kendis* without a spout (usually called *kendi botol* or bottle *kendi*) (Fig. 3.6.a,b.). The features of *kendi* are as follows:

a. Mouth/lip.

This part is used as a hole to fill or pour water (such as the *kundika* type of *kendi*). It has a wide variety of form. In some *kendis*, this part is smaller than the neck part, or sometimes becomes wider with a cap. The diameter of the mouth of *kendi* is mostly adapted to its function for pouring water (on *kundika* type). It becomes narrower on the tip of the mouth or lip.

b. Neck.

One of the main functions of the neck part of *kendi* is as a handle to lift or to move *kendi* when pouring water. A narrow neck of *kendi* is useful to prevent the water from spilling while being carried and to control pouring. Especially for *kendi* without a spout (bottle *kendi*), a neck acts as spout and also serves as a funnel in filling the *kendi*. There is also a lot of variation of neck forms, such as plain-long neck, flanged neck, convex neck or added special shape on the lower end or the upper end of the neck part.

c. Spout.

Specifically for Indonesian prehistoric *kendi*, there is no spout (bottle *kendi*), such as is found in prehistoric *kendi* from Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Melolo (Sumba Island). On a bottle *kendi*, a mouth part functions as a gate for filling and also pouring the water. Besides mouth and neck, spout is also an important part of *kendi*. Spout forms are used as representations of symbolic meanings. For the profane *kendis* (daily use), spout forms are usually elongated tubular. They are not changed due to the consideration of its function. However, spout form on the ritual *kendi* are very different.

d. Belly/Body.

This is the part that has a greatest volume ratio from overall proportion of *kendi*. This part works as a container of water. In general, belly forms are globular and have not a lot of variation.

e. Foot.

This part is a base of *kendi*. In general, this part is flat jointed to the lowest area of the belly. Another foot design is a high shaped annular stand added to the bottom. Such as on *kendi maling* (one of the symbolic *kendi* in Lombok and East Java), the foot works as a water filling hole. It is a hollow cone-shaped tube which is inserted into the belly part, with a height about one-half of a height of the belly.

The important parts of *kendi* are mouth, neck and spout. These parts were changed and evolved variously. A spout forms of some special *kendis* have an important meaning related to their functions in ritual activities. For example in a *corot susu* (union or mammary spout), one of the Javanese *kendi* spout types which has been known since the 14th century, is a symbol of fertility, regeneration, and the germ of life. The spout part is also related to the transfer process. Water containers such as a jug or teapot is a temporary place for water before being transferred to another smaller container such as a cup. In the case of *kendi*, the transfer process is not performed to the other container, but directly transferred to the mouth of the user. The water is poured directly from the *kendi* into the tomb in the funeral ritual. This is also related to the Indonesian tradition, which does not use a drinking cup such as in the culture of Japan, China, Korea, or in the western cultures. The modern use of a cup as a drinking tool in Indonesia has been an influence of foreign cultures.

Fig 3.7. illustrates the evolution of the shape of *kendi* in Indonesia compared to other countries. Variant forms of *kendi* are classified by chronological time since the prehistoric period until the 20th century.

The most important characteristic feature of *kendi* is that they do not have a handle like a jug or teapot. Seen from its function and form, generally, *kendi* share similarities with a jug or teapot as a container for keeping and pouring liquid. An important difference, however, is that the neck part is a handle. This part becomes an important matter for classification of *kendi*.

- **Function and Value**

All pottery has some functions or utilities; the terms utilitarian and functional are usually used for contrast with elite, ceremonial, nonutilitarian, display, or special-purpose pottery³⁴. From the word "*kendi*" which means water vessel, it can explicitly be stated that the use of *kendi* objects related to their activities as a container to hold water or something of liquid. This leads the analysis to some of the functions and the roles of *kendi* in their makers and users society since the beginning of the emergence of this object in Indonesia and parts of Asia.

The main function of *kendi* is as a drinking vessel in which the water remains cool during the day through porosity of the clay. The water is poured from the *kendi* directly into mouth³⁵. The *kendi* is used by most people in their daily activities as a water container for drink. What kind of water is usually stored? It is just plain water, given that Indonesia does not have a culture of tea or coffee. In Java *kendis* containing drinking water are often seen in front of the houses which are offered to passers-by to lessen their thirst. This expresses the hospitality of the people³⁶. In Lombok, *kendi* is called *ceret*, which is used as an everyday container for drinking water as well as for serving guests in important communal meals and also as a ceremonial vessel for holy water, the symbolic embodiment of the life force. Lombok people treat *kendi* with respect appropriate to its sacred role. Even in the kitchen *kendis* are stored above head height-higher than the purest part of the body. Nobody is allowed to step over the *kendi* which is placed on the floor during meal. Their belief to do so is to drive away malicious spirits bringing about calamities³⁷. The mechanism that does not involve direct contact with mouth allows the *kendi* to be used as a means of socialization. In the Hindu period *kendi* served a practical purpose to connect peoples of all castes and ranks.

The other function is as a container of medicinal liquid or a magical potion to cure a disease³⁸. Some *kendis* in Java Island which function as a container for medicinal liquid have a lid with a long pin that acts as a stopper to prevent the lid from falling off and the liquid from spilling when it is used by a sick-man lying in bed. In the shape of animal, they have been used until recently in Borneo for libations and healing ceremonies³⁹. Other shapes used as medicine bottle are *kendis* with holes in the mouth shaped as an onion. This type is still used in Bali to pour water through the nose to cure headaches⁴⁰.

Besides functioning as domestic objects, many types of *kendi* serve as a means of certain religious rituals and ceremonies. Although there lacks of historical written information, archaeological datum indicates that the primary use of pottery in Southeast Asia was for the

utilitarian and ritualistic needs of the local population. Pots made for funerary purposes were amongst the earliest uses. Prehistoric burials yielded an abundance of pottery in this context. Concurrently, earthenware vessels served as containers for storage and cooking of liquids and foods. Later uses of pottery are depicted in stone carvings on temples at Borobudur (Indonesia) and Angkor (Cambodia), dating between the ninth and twelfth centuries. Grave site excavations in Indonesia and the Philippines reveal that ceramics were used as burial wares again between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries⁴¹. Prehistoric *kendis* in Indonesia were used as a funeral gift, such as those found in Tebingtinggi, in Palembang (Sumatra), and in Melolo, East Sumba (West Nusa Tenggara)⁴².

Kendi is also used as a container of holy water⁴³. In Buddhism *kendi* is used by *Brahmanical* ascetic as a water container used for drinking and also for personal ablutions, but not for oblations to the manes, gods, or fire⁴⁴. The reliefs on *Borobudur*, *Mendut*, and the temple of *Brahma* shows that the *kendi* is used as a means of ceremony. Related to this ceremonial *kendi*, there are necked, no-necked, carinated (angled), and shouldered types of *kendi*. The neck shape types are dominated by the neck with the “umbrella” shape (*Catra*) on upper part⁴⁵. A *kendi* which is used for ceremony mostly has a *catra* with a very small neck hole. In this case, the water filling is done by drowning the *kendi* into the water, therefore, this inconvenient way is supposedly used specifically for a ceremonial tool⁴⁶. *Kendi* is used as a means within the ceremony of sacred building establishment. Temple is sacred building, "a residence" of the gods. The location where sacred building is established shall fulfill the requirements specified in the holy scriptures (In the Indian sources there are scriptures relating to the procedures for establishing a sacred building or temple i.e. the scripture of *Manasara*, *Mayamata*, and *Silpaparakasa*). The ceremony of sacred building establishment consists of three stages; First, the ceremony of “*pembibitan*” (the sanctification the land of sacred buildings called "*ankurarpana*"). Second, the placing of brick or groundbreaking ceremony (the making of building foundation, in Bali called "*nasarin*". And the third is the ceremony of placing “*peripih*”. (the ceremony to "animate" building a temple in Bali called the "*ngenteg linggih*"). *Kendi* is used as one of a complementary tool in the ceremony of placing “*peripih*”⁴⁷.

In the sixteenth century, many *kendis* used as a water container by muslims in pilgrimage and in religious festivals⁴⁸. In the ceremonial events held to celebrate religious and secular events, Lombok people used *kendi* to serve water to religious officials and to honor guests. In traditional ceremonies connected with rice planting the water was used by religious elders to wash their

hands before and after the ritual meal was reserved and later carried to the field in a *kendi*. As part of the fieldside rites this water was poured into the irrigation inlet to allow its beneficial power to spread to all corners of the field⁴⁹.

The other functions that are still used today as ritual ceremonial tools i.e. as a means of the inauguration/induction, a means of magical symbol in traditional dancing, drinking tool or toys for children in Java (miniture *kendi*), a magical tool to ward off evil spirits (*kendi maling*), a magical tool to appease the spirits when moving to a new house (double spouted *kendi*), the symbol of fertility (*kendi pratolo*), and presently mainly as home decoration⁵⁰.

3.3 Material Aesthetics: Japanese Traditional *Bizen* Pottery

This sub-chapter seeks to investigate how the Japanese ceramic tradition especially *Bizen* pottery tradition which is reviewed of its esthetic effect that is given by the properties of the materials used and the processes.

Among all of the fascinating cultures and traditions of Japan, ceramic is a tradition that has been one of vital and exciting icons of Japanese arts and has given considerable influence in the development of ceramic art in the world. Back in the sixteenth century, in the Momoyama period (1573-1615), when civil wars among provincial warlords were still rampant, the forms of tea ceremony were founded by Sen No Rikyu. Since that time, tea utensils and they are collectively known as “*Chato*”, or tea ceramics, have become the core of the Japanese ceramic art, exerting a far-reaching influence on the spiritual basis of ceramic production⁵¹.

The material esthetics appeared first in Japan, where a specific social context of culture and religion permitted its emergence in the sixteenth century. From Japan, it would make its way to the rest of the world⁵². A long and great history of Japanese ceramics tradition has inherited a valuable legacy to the current generation what is known as "the six ancient kilns". This term is a representation of the six major sites of ceramic production since the Kamakura era (1185-1333) consisting of *Bizen*, *Echizen*, *Seto*, *Shigaraki*, *Tamba*, and *Tokoname*. The Momoyama period was the stylistic expression of a specific historical time in Japanese history. This era was a time that shows the emergence of the material esthetics around the development and codification of the Tea Ceremony⁵³.

Historically, *Bizen* tradition is well-known as one of the “six ancient Japanese kilns” that has been known since the Kamakura period (1185-1338). In the Muromachi period (1338-1573)

Bizen became the most popular ceramic in Japan along with the popularity of the tea-ceremony because of its superior clay, quite atmosphere, durability, and water preserving qualities. In the Meiji restoration (1868) Japan opened its doors to the West and the public lost interest in Japanese traditional arts. After 1945 there were cultural revival movements in Japan. Kaneshige Toyo (1896-1967), well known as “The Grandfather of the *Bizen* Revival⁵⁴”, was successful in attempts to make wares of Momoyama period quality and was designated a living national treasure. He pointed out a new direction for modern *Bizen* by studying old *Bizen* and devising his own techniques to refine and fire the clay, producing works in the old *Bizen* style that made the most of distinctive qualities of *Bizen* ware⁵⁵. Until now, there are a number of great potters declared a living national treasure i.e. Fujiwara Kei (1899-1983), Yamamoto Tōshū (1906-1994), Fujiwara Yū (1932-2001), and Isezaki Jun (1936).

Related to the concept of material aesthetics, there are three important factors in the creation process of Japanese ceramics including *Bizen*: kiln, material (clay), and form (potter). Only when all these three factors are highly achieved and well balanced a resultant piece is considered to have a high artistic value⁵⁶. In this case, the process of creation is based on how the way the Japanese view on nature. The “view on nature” is not the way how nature is viewed when it is observed and described as an object, but signifies rather the mode of perception one could grasp nature as well as one’s own existence in such a way that both share the same life and vibration by uniting oneself as a subject with nature as an object. For instance, *Bizen* tea bowls, with their quality of clay, *youhen* (kiln effect), *ishihaze* (stone flavor), etc. presents the scenery of nature. These qualities are taken to be associated with the concrete scenery of nature as the beginners’ course of admiring tea bowls. At the advanced level this scenery is understood as the symbolic imagery abstracted from nature that is given admiration as the mystery of nature⁵⁷. This level can be said as spirituality which is an integration of nature and human desire. This spirituality is put above the artificial form or structure.

The "natural-spirituality" has been believed since the Jomon era, a period in which earthenware objects are used as a tool in religious activities. This is an essential consideration of ceramics that is regarded as something sacred related to the Japanese traditional religion, Shinto. Because of this relation between this sort of earthenware and the religion, this type of earthenware is considered to have “natural-spirituality”, rejecting the artificial “form” imported by human beings (especially by the eyes of human beings)⁵⁸. *Zen* was introduced to Japan at 12th century, after the establishment of two elements of Japanese pottery (unglazed ceramics and

glazed ceramics). The beauty of naturally-glazed pottery was interpreted in terms of *Zen* philosophy. The direct taste of clay, which is "incomplete" compared to the glazed pottery, non-homogenous tone of the surface, distortion of form, natural-glaze. This "incompleteness" was not the product of consciousness. This consciousness of unconscious, beauty of spontaneity, has strong affinity to *Zen*⁵⁹.

There is a structural symbiosis between the ceramist's concept and the acts of nature to which the creative process is subjected. This potter starts with a vision, a structural concept that can embrace the contributive aspect of improvisation as well as the will of the kiln, the glaze, and so on⁶⁰. By taking the value of *Bizen* pottery, the principle of natural-spirituality which is demonstrated by an extraordinary wood-firing process can be observed. Noborigama firing process is not just merely about reaching the melting point of temperature. In firing process, the method of reduction or oxidation is about the atmospheric conditions in a chamber. The other important value is that the wood is used not only as fuel, but also as a medium. This stage is a critical point that determines the final appearance of the pieces well known as *goma*, *hidasuki*, *sangiri*, *aobizen*, *botamochi*, and *fuseyaki*, where the finishing-touch is naturally done by fire. It is like a mutual relationship of artist and nature, where they share the authority in determining the final visualization of works.

In the *Bizen* traditional firing using the *noborigama* kiln or the *anagama* kiln, the achievement of "naturally-glazed" is determined by the placement activity within the loading process. Loading the kiln is part of the creative process for *Bizen* potters. This process is like a rough sketch in painting. For example, objects that are placed close to the fire flow will have natural-glazes effects. In contrast, objects that are placed far or the opposite side to the fire flow will not have the effect of glazes. Sake cups may be put inside bigger pots. Bowls are often placed upside down on top of vases. Some pieces are loaded on their sides. Plates can be stacked, but to make their separation easier after firing, each is wrapped with straw (*hidasuki*), or straw is put between the stacked plates. In one piece, both qualities might be presented concurrently. This visualization destroys and negates the symmetry wheeling properties that can also be interpreted as the exclusion of the intention of potter.⁶¹

Basically *Bizen* pottery is "unglazed" stoneware. In western contemporary ceramics, this unglazed quality is known as "naked clay"⁶². At the level of form, clay plays a critical and central role and it is its properties and qualities that are foremost in defining the esthetics⁶³. Here, the term unglazed refers to the glaze effect resulting on the surface of the wall is not the result of

the application of glazing techniques. This effect is also called the natural wood ash glazed. In this style, austere and naïve forms combine with complex, often richly textured surfaces made during a labour-intensive six-ten days firing period. Specially prepared and cured clay is fired raw in a kiln where "fly-ash" and packing are integral to the creation of surface texture and color⁶⁴. A long firing process often causes the ware to crack, to bloat, to deform and even collapse partly. All of these "accidents" are welcomed and they gave the wares their very distinctive aspect. This extreme, excessive approach to making, to process and to materiality are inherent and essential aspects of much Japanese ceramics, the ceramic tradition with the broadest and widest range of stylistic approaches in the world. This esthetics has had a tremendous influence on ceramics in the 20th Century, notably as a polar reaction to the industrial esthetics focused on ideal perfection through cold, impersonal forms and surfaces, mechanically produced⁶⁵.

The meeting between the materials with the technical approach creates a variety of interesting surface colors and natural ash glaze appearances of *Bizen* pottery as follows⁶⁶:

- *Goma* (胡麻)

This term refers to the quality of the black spots of wall surfaces that resembles a sprinkling of sesame seeds, in Japanese called *gomma* (Fig. 3.8). This quality is generated from the melted ash of the pine wood fuel which flies spread along the fire flow inside the fire chamber. This effect is usually found in areas near the mouth of the fire and also the area be passed by the flames borrowing the ash. The colors are mostly glossy or matt golden brown. The dripping *gomma* is called "*tamadare*" means dripping ball. There is also a moss green matt colors quality like melon skin called "*kaseigomma*". This is rarer than "*gomma*" and occurs at on certain parts of the kiln where water vapor builds up in the correct temperature (Fig. 3.8.).

- *Hidasuki* (緋襷)

A red striped pattern left by rice straw (softened by pounding) wrapped around a pot at the time the kiln is loaded. This marks is also called *hi-iro* (火色) or Fire color. The old technique for obtaining "hidasuki/fire cord" is to put pots with rice straw wrapped around them inside another larger pot placed near the hottest part of the kiln. When the pots are shielded from smoke they are in a local slightly oxidizing atmosphere. Under the right conditions the clay body turns white and the parts touched by the rice straw undergo a chemical reaction and turn red (Fig. 3.9.).

- *Youhen* (窯変)

This natural quality is achieved by "reduction" effects that produce the characters of deep blue-black or dark gray color, thick glossy or thinner matt. This is obtained by laying the pots on the floor of the kiln where will be buried in embers (Fig. 3.10.). The other development to produce *youhen* quality is known as *Sangiri* (棧切り), which generates a deep fiery red and a black color similar to carbonized black (Fig. 3.11.).

- *Aobizen/Blue Bizen* (青備前)

This is an unusual color type of body surface which is produced by high-reduction around the pot resulting in a blue tone of the body surface (Fig. 3.12.).

- *Botamochi* (牡丹餅)

This character is a spot of different color in various scales and shapes may be seen where a flattened (mostly roundish) piece of refractory clay is placed against or laid on a pot. After the firing, a different color mark remains as a new layer of appearance (Fig. 3.13.).

- *Fuseyaki* (伏せ焼)

This character is achieved by stacking two pots together where one pot covers another resulting in different surface color. The most common example showing the quality of *fuseyaki* is when a sake cup is placed upside down over the mouth of a bottle of sake, the inside of the sake cup and lip and neck of the bottle of sake will result a different color. The covered parts or areas (or stacked parts) usually have lighter colors than the opened areas. Sometimes the rice straw placed between the pots in order to prevent it from sticking together, or by placing thin "*sembe*" made of mixture fireclay, sand, and rice husk (Fig. 3.14.).

- *Ishihaze* (石爆)

A "stone explosion" that often found on *Bizen* and other *yakishime* (high-fired unglazed stonewares), mostly accidental but some potters add stones for an intentional *ishihaze*. Those stones in came out to the surface by contraction of the clay during drying and firing (Fig. 3.15.).

- *Tsuchiaji* (土味)

The "flavor" of the clay. *Tsuchiaji* is of crucial importance for unglazed stoneware like *Bizen*, *Shigaraki*, and *Iga* wares. The chemical composition of the clay gives each ceramic style its own special qualities and characteristics. Minerals like iron and magnesium fuse with the clay to provide different colors and surface textures, and combine with other factors -- like the type of wood used to fire a kiln -- to provide a unique style. Some of these styles are more porous, others are smoother, lending themselves to glazing. Even from within the same region, mountain clay and rice-field clay give rise to different qualities.

- *Gendo* (原土)

Clay of the remains of the original. In particular, it refers to the clay remains were collected for clay testing. Original clay dug out of the ground without and stuff added to make it more workable.

Endnotes:

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- ⁵ Sumarah Adhyatman. 1987. *Kendi*. Jakarta: Jayakarta Agung Offset. p. 4.
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- ⁸ Michael Sullivan. *op. cit.* p.40.
- ⁹ Michael Sullivan. *loc. cit.*
- ¹⁰ Sumarah Adhyatman. *op. cit.* p. 6-7.
- ¹¹ Sumarah Adhyatman. *op. cit.* p. 5.
- ¹² Sumarah Adhyatman, David Rehfuse, and Hitoshi Shindo. 1979. *Japanese Porcelain from the Seventeenth Century Found in Indonesia*. Jakarta: The Ceramic Society of Indonesia. p. 16.
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- ¹⁷ Frank Hamer. 1975. *The Potter's Dictionary of Materials and Techniques*. London: Pitman Publishing.
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- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰ Endang Sri Hardiati. 2000. Terakota dari Situs-Situs Masa Klasik di Indonesia. In *3000 Tahun Terakota Indonesia: Jejak Tanah dan Api* (pp.19-33). Jakarta: Museum Nasional Indonesia. p. 21.
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- ²⁴ Philip Rawson. *op. cit.* p.100.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 101.
- ²⁶ Prudence M. Rice. *op. cit.* p. 212.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 241.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 212.
- ³¹ *Ibid.* p. 213.
- ³² *Ibid.* p. 214.
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- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Jean McKinnon. *op. cit.* p. 42.
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- ⁴⁸ Barbara Harrison. *op. cit.* p. 31.
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IV. About the Artworks

In order to better understand the interpretation on vessels related to the subject matter of the artworks, this chapter will discuss the relation between vessel with human and space, the making process of artwork series, and the specific explanation of ideas behind the artwork series as the output of this research. There are two perceptions conceived from my experiences and observations on vessels. The first is that vessels could represent the transferability properties of human such as ideas, feelings, or human actions which also are reflected in the mechanism of tradition. Further, I developed this concept in the "sharing" series (Fig. 4.10.). The second is a vessel as a means of connection between human and the reality outside himself which is developed as a concept of connectivity in the "connectivity" series (Fig. 4.11.).

4.1 Interpreting Vessel

- **Vessel and Human**

Vessel is defined from the shape that has the ability to hold or contain something (container). In a broad sense of function vessel is an object that provides a place for both utilitarian and symbolic use. Vessel objects hold, store, or transfer many things and non-things. It is also about the tangible and the intangible realm that has been an issue throughout the ceramics history since prehistoric times associated with the traditions and religious activities.

Vessel form is a logical experience and knowledge. Since the beginning through a long history and tradition of vessel almost all pottery makers start with the vessel form as an initial introduction related to the material sense. Archaeological sources generally cite vessel as one of initial intimate objects that comes from human experience in their attempt to survive. This experience shapes the knowledge. From the clay material human discovered how to modify and transformed it into a resistant material. Looking back to the history when human began to recognize permanent storage that ceramic vessels allowed in Neolithic age could give an idea about how the vessel became an important factor in the development of human civilization. The vessel is, in fact, a metaphor for life. Just think for a moment of a potter whose intent is not overtly sculptural and of the possibilities, even within conventional parameters of forms and techniques. For example, the give and take of pressure – pressure which is energy, as the vessel's volume is pushed out by pressure from within and in turn gives in to the pressure from outside. It is a dialogue of inner and outer forces of which the felt volume and the vessel contour are the witness, the symbol¹.

Container is a property of vessel form. The relation between container and human is about how a container is created, how it operates, and how the container is perceived. One of relationship forms of human and vessels can be examined from the role of vessel as a food container. The hollowness of the vessel enables it to serve as a container. This property provides inner and outer aspects, and also mechanism of transfer. Philosophically, the vessel and bodies, both in relation to food specifically, are intimately connected. Vessel is part of the cycle of life (and death) sustained by food and vessel functions are closely related to bodily functions: vessel contains, preserves, transforms and then excretes solid and liquids, and then it receives the unwanted residues the body rejects. This performative dimension of containers that combines with the domestic dimension of bodies coming in intimate and direct contact with ceramic objects, with pots specifically here, is still central to ceramic practices today².

In many traditions of pottery, the vessel is often associated with women. The woman's role as mother is often likened to mother earth, and similarly the vessel acts as a container that holds, protects, and resists. Earth contains humans, a place where humans live and evolve. For example, the tradition of pottery in Indonesia is generally done by women. In Lombok Island, making pots is women's work and is hard and dirty labour. But Lombok people reveal a status and respect for the craft that belies the present low social position of potters³.

Containment is the conceptual aspect of containers. This concept discusses about how the vessel is associated with human, their personality, and their relationships in a social environment and religious realm. The term containment can be defined as an action of keeping or of preventing the spread of something; act, process, or means of containing; condition of containing. The word "contain" gives a statement about the ability to accommodate or to hold something which expresses the idea that something is so designed that something else can exist or be placed within it. "Contain" refers to what is actually within a given container.

Containment has to do with the relationship between an object and its environment. Containing, for instance, is an expressive idea as well as function—that which the vessel does whether holding amply, offering openly, confining tightly, hiding away secretly or whatever—that relates to so many layers of our conscious and subconscious being, our mundane and our symbolic experience⁴. Through its physicality aspect, vessel is associated with the human body which is commonly known as anthropomorphic concept. Humans have the ability to accommodate, absorb and transfer information as knowledge and build their culture. From this perspective, in a broader sense, the container can also be interpreted as a metaphor of the culture.

The vessel remains an important role as the bridge between human inner life and the outer realities.

- **Considering Space**

Vessel, with its properties of container, is a statement of space. Philosophically, the hollowness of the vessel through its surface or wall forms and divides the space. Considerably, a space becomes a part of itself. Vessel and its containment aspect is closely related to the concept of space such as inner and outer, domestic and public, sacred and profane, or conscious and unconscious.

There are at least two kinds of spaces, interior and exterior. These two empty spaces remark the existence of inner space through the interior of the vessel and of outer space through the surface of vessel. In a certain condition a vessel that has a more complex form enables it to construct more sub-spaces. For a vessel, it is as much defined by the negative space in and around it, as the skin of ceramic itself. This skin is a sort of negotiation between inside and outside, between solid and fluid, and where they intersect. A vessel embodies something and nothing and is an effortless three-dimensional manifestation of form and formlessness.

Containers are constituted of an actual, physical space (given by the thickness of their wall) between two empty spaces, one inside, one outside. Containers, like most objects, are about difference as continuity, not difference as rupture, which is the operative aspect of images, of representations, which separate us from reality and real experiences⁵. The vessel walls not only serve as boundaries but also as connectors. For example, the philosophy of *kendi* used as a tool in a temple cleansing ritual describes how the concept of space prevails. Here, the *kendi* serves as a boundary between space/region of human beings and space/region of the holy deities. However, simultaneously, the *kendi* may as well serve as a connector between divine powers and human beings by the means of water contained in it. The water is taken from the space of humans such that divine powers are applied to the water so that it becomes holy and it can be used for cleansing. The vessel provides space which acts as a means for the convergence and parting of energy, perception, experience or reality. The space can be utilized by ceramic artists to explore both visual potentials and conceptual potentials boosted by perception on and real experiences with vessel objects.

Through its material and forms, a vessel implies the union of two opposing elements. A container is a space where opposites are unified, where differences are reconciled, where polarity

becomes duality. Containers bring together the extremes in reconciliation. They cancel the dialectical impulses of language, so that they are present in discourses, histories, theories and fictions, as well as in images of all types, which always imply a narrative content. All binaries, polarities, opposites and dichotomies (that is to say all forms of hierarchies) are reconciled within the container⁶. A traditional vessel object made from clay has certainly undergone a firing process which is a process which unites opposing elements; water and fire; earth and air. After undergoing the union, all the elements melt and bind each other. This event is believed to be the symbol of visible powers or energy, such as deities, god, spirits of ancestors, and so on. Traditional firing generally involves the roles of energy or supernatural powers in its conduct. This is perceived as an event where the creative powers of human converge with the creative powers of deities or god. Thus, the created object possesses a high values since roles or powers coming from outside of the humans have become inherent in the object. Further, there exists a tradition which uses a vessel form as a symbol of the existence of humans themselves. This means that the vessel object is used as a connector between humans' space and supernatural space which leads to a harmony.

Traditional communities also use earth material and vessel objects as a means for conveying symbols related to humans' life cycles. Containers combine in symbiosis the interior and the exterior, the top and the bottom, the front and the back, the surface and the form, representation and presentation, image and object, function and display, the hand and the eye, nature and culture, and all other binaries we can conceptualize⁷. Symbiotic bound shows continuity of the vessel as a traditional object to remain existent and to play a role in the life of modern humans. We can see how vessels become a vehicle for certain cultures to exist and assimilate with other cultures. Eventually, through the events, the creation of new perception, interpretation and even cultures is possible. The vessels describe how the interaction is created from binaries.

4.2 Making Process

The making process is one of important sections in the whole creative processes of creating artworks. This process is a part of artworks themselves which determine the final appearance of the artworks. This process is a combination of intuition and technical considerations. The creative process not only puts the authority merely to the technical decisions, but also involves the decisions of non-technical issues related to conceptual considerations. In other words, the

personal expression of that appears at final visual of the artworks is an accumulation of activities that involves consideration of intuition and skills.

Ceramic material has its own character with certain limitations and technical rules. It requires a ceramic artist to consider and determine the technical measures since the beginning of making process. The conceptual understanding related to the idea of form which is accompanied by technical considerations may also be read as an attitude and awareness of an artist within his act of creation.

Technically, the making process of the artworks could be described in three major sessions i.e. clay preparation, forming, and firing process as follows:

a. Clay preparation

In the "Sharing" series, the materials used are *Bizen* clay no.2 (備前土2号), chamotte (シャモット), and sand (砂). These artworks are mostly made quite large and heavy. Actually, clay objects will shrink during the drying stage and firing process. Large size and heavy objects are at risk of getting crack during this phase of shrinkage, primarily on objects with a high rate of shrinkage. One of the ways to reduce the rate of shrinkage is by adding filler ingredient into the clay. The use of chamotte or sand in this series aims to restrain shrinkage of *Bizen* clay during drying and firing, and hence reducing the risk of cracking. In this case, the rate of shrinkage of *Bizen* clay after firing process ranges from 14 ~ 18%. By adding chamotte or sand, the rate of shrinkage decreases to 10~12%. The use of chamotte or sand also serves as a filler or an amplifier of the construction of form.

Whereas in the "Connectivity" series, the materials used are *Bizen* clay no.2 (備前土2号), *Bizen* Yama clay (山土), *Bizen* Gendo clay (原土), and *Plered* clay (Indonesian local earthenware). The natural character of *Bizen* clay types on this series are exposed in order to reach and explore the quality of surfaces and colors. (See chapter 3.3)

Especially for *Plered* clay, within the process of this research I had an opportunity to bring about 5 kg of this clay to Japan. This clay is an earthenware types of clay mixed with sand about 30~50%. This type of clay has a good level of plasticity with its reddish brown (terracotta) of body color after being fired to the mature temperature at between 950 to 1050°C. The sand serves as filler or amplifier of body construction instead for adjusting the plasticity and shrinkage. Practically, it is mixed with *Bizen* Gendo clay to adjust the melting point of *Bizen* clay which is relatively higher (up to 1250°C).

These materials above are mixed or processed manually into a certain composition. *Bizen* clay no.2 (備前土 2 号) is usually in a ready-use condition (plastic state) so it does not need to be processed. While Yama *Bizen* clay (山土) and *Bizen* Gendo clay (原土) which is obtained in dry and coarse lumps of soil conditions must be processed first into the plastic state. For this condition, the soil is treated by pounding it to a fine powder. Powdered soil is then mixed with water and drained up until it is dry to a working consistency, and is finally wedged by hand. Finally, each of the types of these ready-used clays are mixed with other materials in different ratios through wedging up to a new composition of ready-to-use clays.

b. Forming process

Forming process of "sharing" series of artworks:

- Forming process is done by making the body part. First of all the base/pedestal is made from wide slabbed clay that is pinched and shaped like a double-wall bowl with a hole in the center of the inside. This hole is made to reduce the risk of cracking during shrinkage. The wall thickness of the body is between 0.5~1 cm. The lower part is usually made a bit thicker than is the top. Since it is made quite large, the inside of the body's wall is supported by a framework construction that serve to strengthen the construction of forms. These supporting frameworks are built vertically from the bottom/base to the top of inside of the body's wall. (Fig. 4.1.a.~c.)
- Once the making of body part is complete, followed by making the neck and spout part. These parts are built separately with the body that are achieved by throwing technique using an electric wheel. (Fig. 4.1.d.~ f.)
- The next step is joining or assembling the neck and spout part with the body part. The leather-hard is the best conditions for the assembling process. The important technical consideration here is timing and controlling the level of clay moisture. The high differences in clay moisture levels between the parts to be joined can cause cracks. Joining the neck part at the center-top of the body is relatively easier than joining the spout parts at the side-around of the body. Spout parts that assembled on the side-around of the body is very at risk of cracking. A thick and relatively heavy spout part sometimes causing cracks in the joined area or even cause the spout apart from the body. This problem can be solved by making the spout part thinner and lighter, with a thickness between 0.3~0.5 cm.

- The process of assembling of spout part is no different from that of the neck part. After the position or joined area at the body part has been determined, it is slightly hollowed out to provide a flexible space during shrinkage (fig. 4.1.g.). The two parts to be joined are scratched at the edges, some slip are applied and then the parts are joined (fig. 4.1.h, i.). Placing a coil in the corners of the joined pieces and gently pressing the coil into the corner will strengthen this part. The last step is finishing it by using a moist sponge as the final touch before being dried and fired (fig. 4.1.j, k.). The drying process is carried out approximately 1~2 weeks until bone dry state and ready to be fired (fig. 4.1.l.).

Forming process of "connectivity" series of artworks:

- In this series the forming process begins by making globular forms or a hollow ball form as a basic form. This form is built gradually from the bottom side up to an almost completed globular shape (Fig. 4.2. a~c.). All the works in this series are made relatively thin with a thickness ranging between 0.3~0.5 cm.
- Next, this globular basic form is responded further by cutting off certain areas to make holes (Fig. 4.2.d.). These holes are continued by constructing new cavities which are interrelated to each other (Fig. 4.2.e, f.) The use of soft foam pads is necessary because the built forms are quite thin they have organic contours.
- The whole parts of the forms particularly the lips or edges are made by building walls with thin slabbed of clay which are constructed and added one on top of the other continually, then pinched, stroked and scraped to complete the form. When forming one part, the other part is covered by plastic wrap to keep it from becoming dry (Fig. 4.2.g, h.). If the condition of slabbed clay is too dry, it may cause cracks on the joined area. Complex shapes take quite a long time to shape. But it can also be used to dry the body part to be more evenly distributed. These thin wall shapes require slow and even drying process to avoid cracking. Although the walls are thin, the meeting between the cavity walls constructs it into a solid form of construction. One wall is supported the other walls.
- The lip or edge parts are usually trimmed with a moist sponge. The complicated things are when to determine and how the intersection between the cavity walls is executed, what direction the cavities are headed, and how the end of the lips or edges is placed. In other words, the role of intuition plays quite largely in determining when and how the overall form construction is executed.

c. Firing process

During the making process of the artwork series, there are two ways of firing, i.e. by using electric kiln and *noborigama* (*noborigama* kiln). Both are conducted by the method of oxidation and reduction.

Firing process, either reduction or oxidation by using an electric kiln, is performed for 48~52 hours (Fig. 4.3.a.). Firing temperature achieved ranges between 1180~1230°C. The kiln fires to temperature using the elements and the atmosphere is controlled by the burner. Reduction firing is conducted by creating a reduction atmosphere in the electric kiln using a small propane burner. This reduction atmosphere is reached by lighting the burner and sliding it under the burner port in the bottom of the kiln (Fig. 4.3.b.). The propane pressure is set and adjusted to the reduction level that may be seen from the length of flames coming out of the exit flue or peep holes. Generally, the lengths of flames range between 8~15 cm. Reduction firing applied from 1000°C to 1180°C for about 9 hours (Fig.4.3.c.).

Firing process using *noborigama* kiln requires special preparation and methods. The process is performed by team work since the beginning of the preparation up to the firing execution. It is a great pleasure that this campus is facilitated with a *noborigama* kiln and routinely conducts a firing practice to accommodate the study activities of students who are interested in the ceramic tradition, especially the *Bizen* pottery. This annual firing practice is a very valuable opportunity for me because not all universities have traditional kiln facilities and organizes the study by traditional approaches like this.

The kiln facility at the campus is a *noborigama* type of kiln with two chambers and a chimney. The first firing chamber (the front part) is called "udo" (運道) which means "the path for carrying things". The second firing chamber (the rear part) is called "kedo" (煙道) which means "smoke flow path" (煙の通る道). The kiln is about 6 meters in length, 2 meters in width, 1.5 meters in height, and 4 meters in height for chimney, with multi side-stoking holes in each of the chambers (Fig. 4.4.). The terminologies of *udo* and *kedo* in the *noborigama* kiln are adopted from the terminologies used in the *anagama* type of kiln. Although they are both "climbing kilns", they are significantly different. A *noborigama* kiln is also called "multi chamber climbing kiln", climbing kiln with several chamber and a chimney. Whereas an *anagama* kiln is a single chamber climbing kiln shaped as a tube or tunnel without chimneys. Initially, *anagamas* were entirely built underground on a side of a hill/mountain without side-stoking holes (Fig.4.5.). The

only stoking/fire hole, as an access for reloading the firewood, was located in the front part or the mouth of the kiln.

Historically, it can be said that the *noborigama* kiln is an evolution from *anagama* kiln. For big kilns, *noborigama* kilns originally have as many as 12 firing chambers. However, for smaller kilns used in recent eras, the firing chambers are limited from 2 to 5 chambers. The multi-chamber enables the application of different firing techniques in each of the chambers (reduction or oxidation methods). In the beginning, the firewood is loaded through the "front stoking holes/front fire holes" and then through the "side stoking holes". While the adjustment of firing atmosphere is done by regulating the amount of fire and air and by controlling the temperature increase rate.

When learning *noborigama* firing techniques, many aspects have to be paid attention to during the firing process. It is not only matters related to temperatures but also effects that are produced. Therefore, *noborigama* firing techniques take into account types of fuel used (types of wood), air supply, firewood supply, positions of objects in the chamber and temperature and atmosphere adjustments in the chamber.

The duration of firing which is relatively long (7~9 days) shows that the temperature increase is slow. This causes wood ash to hover around in the chamber, set slowly and stick on the body of pieces, and melt such that it produces "natural ash glaze" effect which is difficult to achieve through other types of firing.

The recent generation using the *noborigama* kiln is approximately 30% and the rest prefers using the *anagama*. Master Jun Isezaki (1936, Living National Treasure) also used the *anagama*. In addition to having smaller kiln and to being fast in its construction, the *anagama* firing techniques are shorter and more practical.

Prior to firing, the first step is preparing a big amount of firewood. This process of preparation of firewood is usually done about six months before firing day. The wood used is a type of red pine tree (赤松木) and cedar tree (杉材木) (Fig. 4.6.). Other support materials are prepared straw (藁) and wood ash (ゴマ). Straw is required to produce the effect of *hidasuki*, whereas wood ash produces the effect of natural ash glazes (such as *goma* and *youhen*).

Firing process with *noborigama* kiln is performed by the team for 7~9 days. Firing process consists of three steps i.e. loading the kiln (窯詰め) (Fig. 4.7.), firing (窯焼き), and unloading the kiln (窯出し). The team consists of students that are divided into shift groups. Each group typically serves between 8~12 hours. The temperatures and kiln atmospheres are reached by

reduction and oxidation methods. Reduction is achieved by supplying a large amount of firewood into the kiln so that the chamber is filled with flames that produce a lot of carbon (Fig. 4.8.). This reduction atmosphere will spread wood ash through the fire flow in the chamber. This will result in natural ash glaze effects typical of *Bizen* pottery. In addition, the surface quality of the object is also determined by the ingredients of clay. The content of the Iron in *Bizen* clay gives a rich type of colors, from brownish red color, blue, gray, to golden.

In a *noborigama* firing process, the importance is the difference in the character of surface, color, or quality natural ash glaze called *youhen*, which is mostly determined by how and where the pieces are put into the kiln. Loading the kiln is a part of the creative process. The process is like a rough sketch in painting. *Noborigama* firing process is not just merely about reaching the melting point of temperature. In firing process, the method of reduction or oxidation is about the atmospheric conditions in a chamber. This stage is a critical point that determines the final appearance of the pieces. It is well known as *goma*, *sangiri*, *botamochi*, *hidasuki*, *aobizen*, and *fuseyaki*, where the finishing-touch is naturally done by fire. It is like a mutual relationship of the artist and nature, where they share the authority in determining the final visualization of works.

Unloading the kiln (窯出し) is performed when the temperature inside the kiln has reached a safe point (under 50 °C) which is generally done 7~10 days after firing (Fig. 4. 9.).

The awareness of material and technique, as well as the awareness of form is a basic component in the creative process that is conceived as a set of ideas in an attempt to achieve the quality of inventiveness in the overall of this research process. The entire creative process from the beginning of materials preparation, execution process, until the final visual of the artworks is an integral part of my work. It means that the materials and making processes are also part of the concept.

I choose the types of *Bizen* clay and *Plered* clay in order to explore their special unglazed character. This characters of materials (unglazed *Bizen* and *Plered* clay) is reminiscent of the concept of integration the spirit of human and nature. Vessel as a form cannot be separated from history and tradition. Wares which are not glazed, not even slipped, but perhaps only burnished have quite another feel. Their body substance constitutes their surface. The pot body is made to declare itself through its own process of making⁸. Especially for *Bizen* clay as a major material, an important consideration is placed on the quality of surface and color as an attempt to explore "the flavor of clay (*tsuci aji*)". This flavor of clay gives a wide space for the material to express

their original quality. The character of rough grain clay that contains a lot of impurities will provide a “full of surprises” surface quality. One of them is called "*isihaze*", which displays natural cracks on the body surfaces caused by forced-out stones within the clay body.

Related to the forming techniques, not all ceramic artists put their intention at directness and fastness in constructing their clay forms like a technique achievement by wheel. Some of them actually prefer constructing their forms slowly and carefully. A further division of forms, ‘thrown’ and ‘constructed’, is more obvious as they are two separate approaches. One, throwing proceeds from intuition and a skill that has become second nature; the other, construction, requires a thinking closer to that of the sculptor’s – measured, thought out, less instinctive⁹. This approach is considered as an alternative where they can give a time to consider and determine quietly what kind of images and symbols to be placed into the works.

The forming techniques mostly use a "hand built (*tebineri*)" for achieving asymmetric or elastic forms, while partly achieved by throwing technique. I consider this is the best technique where the thickness of the wall could be controlled carefully. It is almost five years since I began to use this technique in the making process of artworks that generally tend towards asymmetry and organic forms. In the "connectivity" series, the thickness is one of the important intentions at my work. In addition to showing the quality of technical achievement, the thin wall gives different experiences and perceptions related to the quality of the depths of space, the tactile nature of the surface, and the elasticity of material.

There are a lot the knowledge and values that I can absorb from traditional objects. Related to the concept of interconnection of space, hand built technique represents my emotional relationship with clay material and the memory of the Indonesian ancient pottery tradition. It was long time before the well known pottery wheel that people construct their clay objects including *kendi* by paddling technique. Their excellent technique achievement can be seen on the display hall of the museum of ceramics in Indonesia. Ceramic objects, both as ritual or utilitarian objects shows the amazing quality of technical, scale and sense of form. The use of local clay represents my personal memory or perceptual experience as an individual that is always connected with the objects of tradition.

This is sort of story of my encounter with the spaces outside myself. All of these forms reflect my consciousness and experiences of the realm of the vessel forms. By this approach, the visual of artworks would evoke the experiences and the memories about the roots of vessel, its history, and tradition.

4.3 Artwork Series

- **Sharing**

This series is specifically about the concept of “sharing” which is emphasized on the issue of the vessel as a metaphor of the activities of inheritance. This concept grows from the perception that the vessel could represent the transferability properties of human such as ideas, feelings, or human action which is also reflected in the mechanism of tradition. In my perception, traditional vessels are an object which records the issues of human being as an individual who has a role in their social environment. It is like a tool that shows the issues as well as providing a solution. Both of the actions above are a basic and a source of inspiration in the creative process.

Departing from the tradition of *kendi*, a visual approach performed by borrowing *kendi*'s form and then creating it into a new form that implies a form of "sharing". Sharing is a basic component of human interaction, and is responsible for strengthening social ties. Sharing is the process of giving, dividing or distributing of knowledge, while tradition means to transmit, to hand over, to give for safekeeping, or to inherit the pattern of thought or action. In the development of tradition, sharing is one of the main processes to spread out the information or knowledge of tradition. In other words, tradition means sharing the knowledge to the next generation.

In fact, today many traditions almost disappear, including tradition of *kendi*. The main factor is the knowledge about that tradition does not spread. By this condition, I also try to draw the scarcity of tradition to be shared. The scarcity of tradition is a condition where a space of traditions to inherit value and knowledge becomes narrower. The word sharing is motivated by the current condition where the traditional objects such as *kendi* are getting rarely found, used and produced. This tradition is being endangered. Modern people today have no interest in the objects of tradition. The main principle of tradition is the process of inheritance of ideas, artifacts, or actions from one generation to next generation. However, each generation has their own way to interpret the tradition. The traditional values could be survived, adopted or even rejected. In the activity of inheritance, it is necessary to have a compromise. The compromise is not an absolute giving process, but more like a mutual act of giving or sharing.

Visually, the object of *kendi* refers me back to its dual function of containing and giving. These two functions can be thought as an issue of access (opening) of collecting tradition knowledge from the past, and the other one concerning protection (closed) by preserving and

maintaining the tradition. I think the image of sharing is a process of give and take. This process requires a transfer tool. The spout and the mouth of a *kendi* are a representation of transfer tool.

The spout and the mouth shapes of *kendi* vary widely. In this series, I choose the shape of mammary spout (*corot susu*), because it has a strong philosophy. In the 14th century, the bulbous spout form became known as an onion or mammary spout. In Indonesia the popular name is *kendi susu* or milk spout. This form has significant meaning in Indonesian-Hindu society. This form derived from guava fruit shape (*Eugenia*) that is known as a symbol of *padmamula* or seed of life. The other philosophy is holy water or water of life. Holy water means kindness, as well as breast milk which means source of human life. It is a kind of water that must be shared to other people. *Kendi susu* is also means fertility. The role of breast milk is the source of life, the first food source when human is born, and the tool to give a live from mother to child.

I think a growing number of spout (transfer tool) will facilitate and accelerate more the process of sharing. The neck is the analogy of the entry gate of knowledge, as in the past identical with the symbol of honor or status. When someone grasps this handle, it seems to be supposed to focus within the whole parts of object. It represents concentric space as an analogy of order inside.

Body and surface of works represent the characteristics of *Bizen* pottery. In fact, the story in each tradition has differences in every country. One of Japanese oldest pottery traditions is represented by *Bizen* pottery tradition. In contrast with Indonesia, a long story of *Bizen* tradition has already got lots of important impacts and has become one of the main power of the developing of ceramic in Japan. The tradition values are still survived and become the background of the development concept in Japanese contemporary ceramics. In this case, contemporary ceramics are presented in the context of a continuation of the tradition and provided an overview of the Japanese culture.

The values of “tradition” are very strongly marked in *Bizen* pottery. This quality becomes an important aspect of the identity of *Bizen* pottery as a great tradition. By showing the quality of *Bizen* pottery, this is a kind of sharing behavior of values and knowledge between the two traditions. Tradition is used as a tool for spreading the information of cultural identity. It means that creating a new piece of an artwork is part of process of understanding and appreciating the culture.

- **Connectivity**

During the process of making in previous “sharing” series, I have tried to make and observe various forms of vessel with a *kendi*’s form as a basic reference. This is an important personal experience. In the "sharing" series, the neck and spout parts are made separately with the body parts. Viewing and paying close attention to these part shapes from a different angle generates a new perception. I see the same force at the inside and outside, both of which support each other in an attempt to form a space. This is the space that has been perceived as a hollow area. From this point, it is something interesting to question about the vessel and the perception of space. This process encourages me to reconsider the essence of the vessels.

Thinking about the essence of the vessels leads me to see how a container is created, how it operates, and how the container is perceived. A vessel could be considered as a hollow utensil or closed containment of space used as a container. Through its history and traditions, the creations of vessels are encouraged by the need of receptacle instrument. This suggests that the essence of vessel lies in the aspects of space and the connection between spaces itself.

The essence of containment is the space, the hollow space. Vessel is a vehicle or space where the opposites are connected and unified. It is a connection between top and bottom, front and back, interior and exterior, surface and form, sacred and profane, representation and presentation, past and present, domestic and public, material and concept, nature and culture.

This concept of connectivity deals with the concept of vessel as a means of connection. This is about a vessel as a means of connection between human and the reality outside himself. The idea is seeking the essence of container related to the aspects of space (inside and outside; object and environment). The container is a manifestation of space and can also represent the expansiveness of space. It means a barrier or holder as well as a connector. The intersection between the hollow spaces (cavities) implies connectivity between man and space. Visual approach conducted by exposing the interaction between the interior and exterior to illustrate "connectivity". These spaces are formed of the interconnection between the elements of the form i.e. neck, spout, or body.

During the working process, I observed that *kendi* generally has a complex shape with a plain surface quality. Whereas *Bizen* pottery generally has a simple shape but displaying a rich quality of surfaces evoked by a natural motion of flame. These traits or nature technically become an important consideration in my works. By combining these traits I try to capture more widely some possibilities of form that visually can be developed and connect it to the theme.

Furthermore, in this series there are some changes of form especially at the intersection between the interior and exterior of the form. Starting from the idea and exploration of *kendi's* form, these works still present the basic elements such as spherical and cylinder shapes. In *kendi's* form the neck part is generally a hollow cylinder with a thin lip of *Catra* (Sacred Umbrella) shape at the upper part. Sacred Umbrella represents the canopy or firmament of the sky, the infinitive space, the expansiveness, unfolding and protective quality of space. Space is that elemental matrix that contains, holds, and conducts all phenomena. Space is the repository and conduit of everything that is manifested, embodied or incarnated. This *Catra* part is simplified and made wider than previous works, and then combined to expose the inside of the cavity. I think the intersection between the cavities is interesting to be further explored. This intersection will build a new cavity that can be made continually.

The making process is not just struggling with technical problems and mastering, but further this is how the process of maturation of the idea through in-depth observation, collect various experiences, and read the values through the story and history of traditional vessel. In other words, by creating this artworks, I want to expand referents and meaning, absorbing the history, tradition, and values of the vessel.

Technically, the intersection between these cavities can strengthen the structure of the form. Even though it is made with a minimum thickness (thin), it still can be stable and sturdy. This quality of visual is one of the ways to illustrate how the concept of connectivity is perceived.

There is several awareness of the vessel associated with the concept of connectivity:

- Vessel is a vehicle or space where the opposites are connected and unified. It is connection between top and bottom, front and back, interior and exterior, surface and form, sacred and profane, representation and presentation, past and present, domestic and public, material and concept, nature and culture.
- Traditional ceramics illustrate many of the above relationships through a form of vessel. Traditional vessels are used for ceremonial or ritual expression. In the conventional sense, the ritual activity is a meeting, gathering, connectedness, linkage, or activities that aim to connect between something to something else. Human with God, Deities, ancestral spirits, or between human with human in a particular social sphere. Further, these forms, questioned about my relationship with the object, human's relationship with the object, as an awareness and consideration in order to interpret and appreciate the tradition.

- The *kendi* has an interesting complexity of form. The intersection between the walls implies connection activity.
- The character of the material (*Bizen*) is reminiscent of the concept of integration the spirit of human and nature. Vessel as a form cannot be separated from history and tradition.
- The forming techniques mostly use a "tebineri (手びねり)" for achieving asymmetric or elastic forms, while partly achieved by throwing technique. Due to the use of *Bizen* clay as a major material, an important consideration is placed on the quality of surface and color as an attempt to explore "the flavor of clay (土味)".

Endnotes:

- ¹ Garth Clark (Ed.). 2006. *Ceramics Millenium: Critical Writing on Ceramic History, Theory, and Art*. Canada: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. p. 31-32.
- ² Paul Mathieu. 2009. *The Art of the Future*. Retrieved from: <http://www.paulmathieu.ca/>. p. 221.
- ³ Jean McKinnon. 1996. *Vessels of Life: Lombok Earthenware*. Bali: Saritaksu Bali. p. 81.
- ⁴ Garth Clark. *op. cit.* p. 31.
- ⁵ Paul Mathieu. *op. cit.* p. 246.
- ⁶ Paul Mathieu. *op. cit.*
- ⁷ Paul Mathieu. *op. cit.* p. 247.
- ⁸ Philip Rawson. 1984. *Ceramics*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press.
- ⁹ Peter Dormer. 1994. *The New Ceramics: Trends + Traditions (revised edition)*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd. p. 32.

Conclusion

Based on the investigation processes related to the research objectives, several conclusions which refer to the two main activities in the research are drawn. The first activity is literature study to interpret the philosophy and values of traditional vessels. The second activity is the creation of the artworks which shows how the literature study influences the creative process. Elaborated next are the conclusions of the research:

- Literature study on the definition of traditional ceramic and vessel is done as an effort to investigate the philosophy of traditional vessels. The result of the literature study shows that the terminology "traditional ceramic" refers to the ceramic tradition that has existed since the old days in which a certain culture prevailed. The terminology is used to express the status of the identity of the ceramic object of a specific local culture. Whereas, "vessel" is a general terminology used in the world of ceramics to refer to hollow objects served as receptacles/containers. In Japanese, the terminology "*utsuwa*" means hollow utensil or container. In its development, since 1980 the terminology of vessel has been used in the discourse of ceramic art in Europe to refer to ceramic objects which depart from the tendency of vessel forms. This terminology is used to convey a status to the ceramic as a new artistic form. Thus, vessels are considered as a genre in the scope of ceramic art. The terminology of vessel is used to differentiate vessel objects as an artwork and vessel objects as a pottery object served as utensils. The traditional ceramic makers creating pottery objects are inherently called potters whereas vessel object makers are called artist potters or ceramic artists.
- Historically, the emergence of "studio pottery" has been the embryo of the development of ceramic art since the nineteenth century, and also has shown the dynamics of what has taken place in traditional ceramics. Studio pottery were initiated by individuals or a group of potters (studio potters) who tried to interpret traditional ceramics with artistic objectives based on personal expressions in a scope of small-scale production (studio). Studio potters who are also called artist potters work with clay as a "medium of artistic expression". The development of pottery studios also relates to the development of the influences of Japanese ceramics in Europe and America. The *Zen* philosophy in the concept of tea ceremony, which is adopted as aesthetic values of Japanese traditional ceramics, rapidly developed among

western ceramic artists. The development relates not only to forms but also to traditional firing techniques. In the present contemporary ceramic art, the ceramic medium is used in various new forms of expression. However, the characteristics of the vessel forms still exist and are desirable.

- In the context of ceramic art, philosophically, traditional vessels are an object providing "basic language of expression" conveyed through form, surface and creative process. Whereas, ceramic artists play a role in interpreting and expressing the values of vessels, in which the characteristics of being traditional are inherent, through a modern point of view. Thus, the existence of the tradition can always prevail and be sustainable to pass on to the next generation. As a part of history, traditional ceramic objects have been made and created to be used by the supporting communities for various interests. As the supporting communities are not constant, the "traditional" characteristics are sometimes interpreted differently in each generation. However, the tendency to the base form, vessel, is still referred to. The vessel philosophy has departed from the phenomenon emerging from ceramic artists since the beginning of the development of the discourse of modern ceramic art. Many ceramic artists use traditional vessels as a basic reference in their artworks. They pay more attention to medium and vessel forms to explore issues on clay, gender, body, space, even sculptural forms. Several themes depart from traditional vessel approaches which are the containment, the organic abstraction, the pattern and decoration, the architecture, or the expression of aesthetic primitivism. The traditional vessel philosophy also relates to how an artist interprets and communicates his/her expressions through a visual language of vessels. The language of vessels can be read in three forms, namely as a document, a metaphor, or as an object of rituals.
- The values of traditional vessels consist of form values, material values and technical values, which are read as knowledge. These knowledges can be explored through material, technical and aesthetic approaches. The form values in this research depart from the analysis on *kendi* object, which is one of Indonesian traditional vessels that has been known since the prehistoric era. The unique form value of the *kendi* lies in that it does not have a handle as that of jugs and teapots in general. The form of the *kendi* is that of the form of jars, with special specifications on the spout, neck, and mouth parts. In the development of *kendis*, the three parts have undergone many significant changes. It so occurs due to the fact that the three parts are closely related to contents of certain symbols in ritual activities. The form

value of *kendis* is related to the concept of human-human relationships, and human-nature relationships. The form value of traditional vessels can generally be read as the essence of ceramics which refer to the aspect of space and their transferability. The material and technique values in this research refer to the Japanese ceramic tradition known as "*Bizen* pottery" The result of the analysis shows that the Japanese ceramic tradition, including *Bizen*, has three significant aspects in its creative process related to the concept of "material aesthetics", namely kiln, clay, and form. The creative process is based on how the Japanese see nature. The quality of the material and techniques is shown through the body and the surface of the ceramics. In the advanced levels, the visualization on the body and the surface of the ceramics is interpreted as the symbolic images of nature, where spirituality is above the artificial forms. This is what it is called as natural-spirituality. In *Bizen* pottery, the concept of natural-spirituality is realized through the quality of material and firing process. Thus, the traditional firing process using the *noborigama* kiln not only relates to the achievement of temperatures but also relates to the arrangement techniques, types and quality of the fuel used, and the firing duration. That said, wood serves not only as fuel but also as medium. The overall firing process definitely determines the final result of a *Bizen* pottery artwork. The combination of material and the technical approaches yields various qualities of interesting surface colors and natural ash glaze such as *goma*, *hidasuki*, *sangiri*, *aobizen*, *botamochi*, *fuseyaki*, *ishihaze*, *tsuchiaji* and *gendo*.

- The literature analysis result yields a big impact on the creative process. Through the process of experimentation, observation, and evaluation, the studio work which took two and a half years produced two series of artworks. The first series, "sharing", highlights the vessel as a metaphor of inheritance process. This concept departs from the perception that vessels may represent the characteristic of transferability inherent in humans such as ideas, feelings or humans' acts, which are also reflected in the mechanism of the inheritance of tradition. The second series, "connectivity", shows the essence of vessels as a means for connecting the space. This concept departs from the perception that the vessel form is a statement of space, and thus the vessel can be meant as a means of connection between humans and realities beyond them. The concept of both of the artworks is based on my realization on the vessel, namely: The vessel is meant as an object able to contain, store, or transfer many objects on non objects (tangible and intangible realms); The vessel form is a logical and knowledge experience; The vessel has the characteristic of hollowness providing

the inner and outer aspects, and also transfer mechanism; Concerning the characteristic of container, the vessel is a statement of space; The vessel is a union of two opposing elements. Technically, there exist several kinds of realization: The making process is the combination of intuition and techniques; The use of *Bizen* material is meant as a study of characteristics of unglazed ceramics; The forming technique using the "hand-built" method (*tebineri*) is the best technique to produce asymmetrical objects requiring good controls on the quality of the wall thickness of the object; The firing process is done using electric kiln and *noborigama* kiln; Both use oxidation and reduction methods; Firing using the *noborigama* kiln is the best experience obtained so far; The making process not only evolves around the technical and mastering problems but also further evolves around how to ripen ideas through thorough observations, collecting various knowledge, and continuous practices.

- During the study years, several publication activities were conducted:
 - Regular research progress presentation within the university surroundings.
 - Ceramic Exhibition, NamYi Seom International Ceramics Festival, South Korea. 2012.
 - Ceramic Exhibition, the 4th International Ceramic Magazine Editors Association (ICMEA) 2013 Emerging Ceramic Artist Competition, Fuping, China. 2013.
 - Ceramic Exhibition, Earth and Flame (土と炎展), Museum of Kake, Kurashiki, Japan. 2014.
 - Solo Exhibition, The Meeting of Cavities (空洞の出会い), Kurashiki Gallery, Kurashiki, Japan. 2014.
 - Final Project Exhibition, Museum of Kake, Kurashiki, Japan. 2015.

The activities aimed at exhibiting new artworks which and obtaining feedback which could be used as evaluation material for improving and increasing the quality of the artworks. Additionally, it was aimed as a manifestation of moral responsibility towards the public for the created artworks.

- Studying traditional ceramics from the commencement of the study process yields understanding that interpreting and appreciating tradition is part of creative processes. Studying Japanese *Bizen* pottery tradition has given new knowledge in Japanese ceramic tradition and different experience on how to realize the philosophy of the tradition into practice, interpreting artworks, observing and appreciating processes. The differences in climates, geographic conditions and historical backgrounds shape different cultures and traditions, and conceive different artworks. The knowledge and experiences obtained during these years of study are expected to contribute well to the development and enrichment of

ceramic art field. Moreover, new knowledge and experiences are expected to stimulate the emergence of new research and further the creative process. In particular, the *tebineri* technique and the firing using the *noborigama* kiln are expected later to be continued and applied in Indonesia.

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Appendix A. Figures



Fig. 2.1. *Jomon* pot, from Japan, early *Jomon* period, about 5,000 BC.



Fig. 2.2. Artworks by Magdalene Odundo, 2013, variable dimensions.



Fig. 2.3. “Healing Being”, artwork by Lawson Oyekan, 2000.



Fig. 2.4. “Balancing Vessels”, artwork by Jane Perryman, 2000.



Fig. 2.5. “Vase with his signed box and wrapping cloth” (花器 共箱), artwork by Ryuichi Kakurezaki.

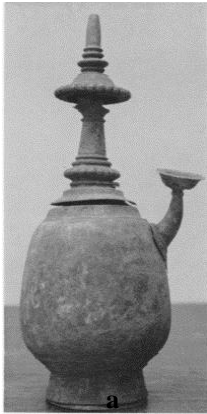


Fig. 3.1. a. *Kundika* form, in Central Java, Indonesia, 8th century. (Sullivan, 1957: 15)
 b. *Kendi*'s type of Majapahit, Indonesia (14th century). (Damais, 2012)



Fig 3.3. The method of pouring water from *kendi*. (Adhyatman, 1987)

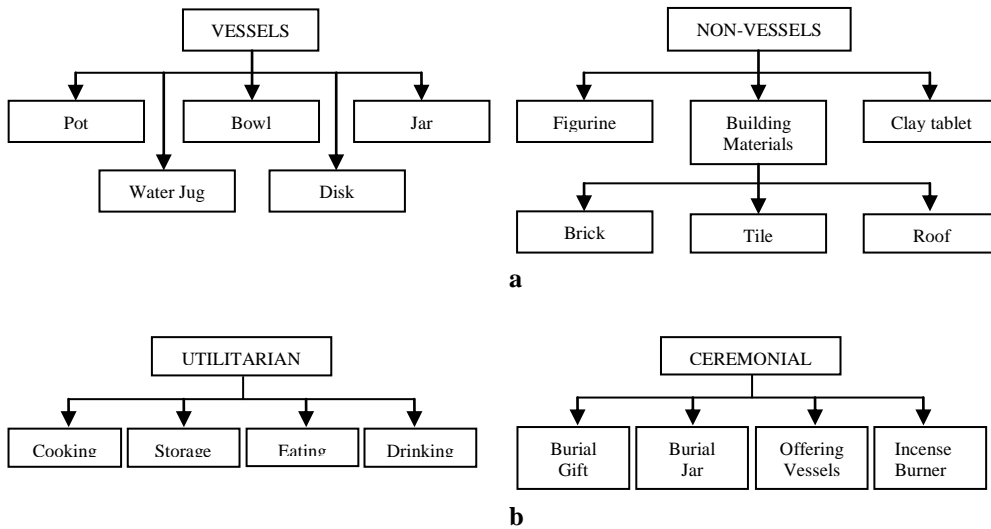


Fig. 3.2. a. Clay Products Classification.
 b. Earthenware Functions. (Soegondho, 2003: 79)

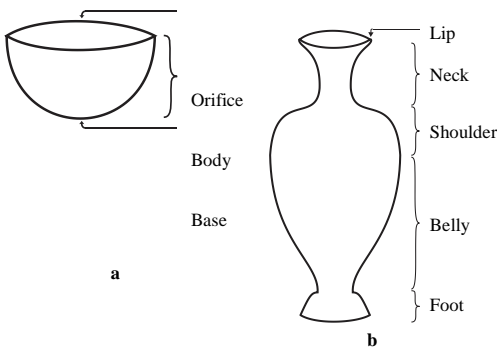


Fig. 3.5. a. The anatomy of simple vessel form.
 b. The anatomy of more complex vessel form.

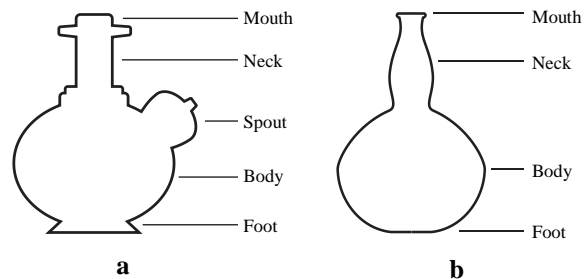


Fig. 3.6. a. The Anatomy of *Kendi* with spout.
 b. The anatomy of *Kendi* without spout (Bottle-*kendi*).

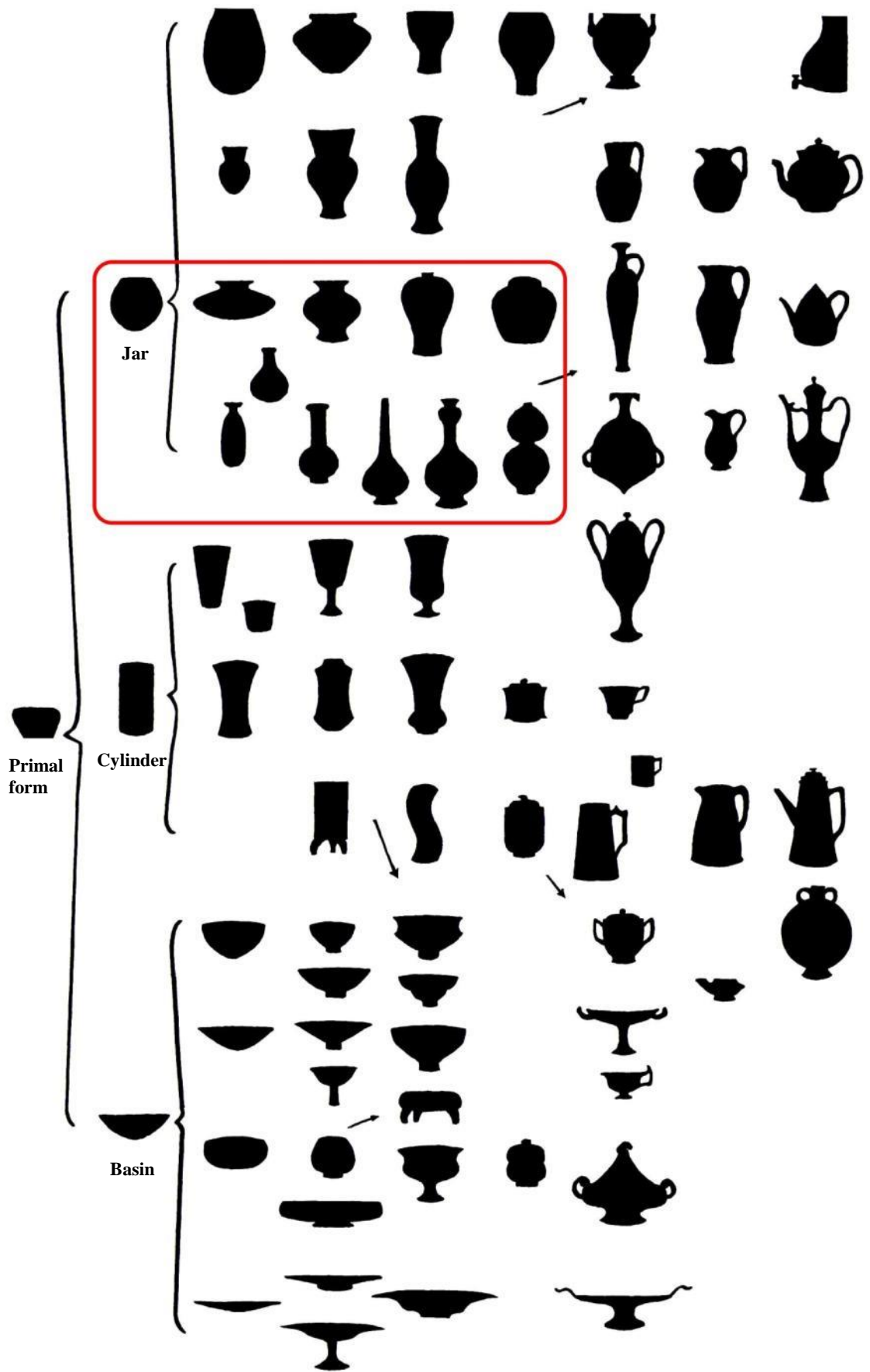


Fig. 3.4. Table of examples of morphological relationship. (Rawson, 1984: 94-95)

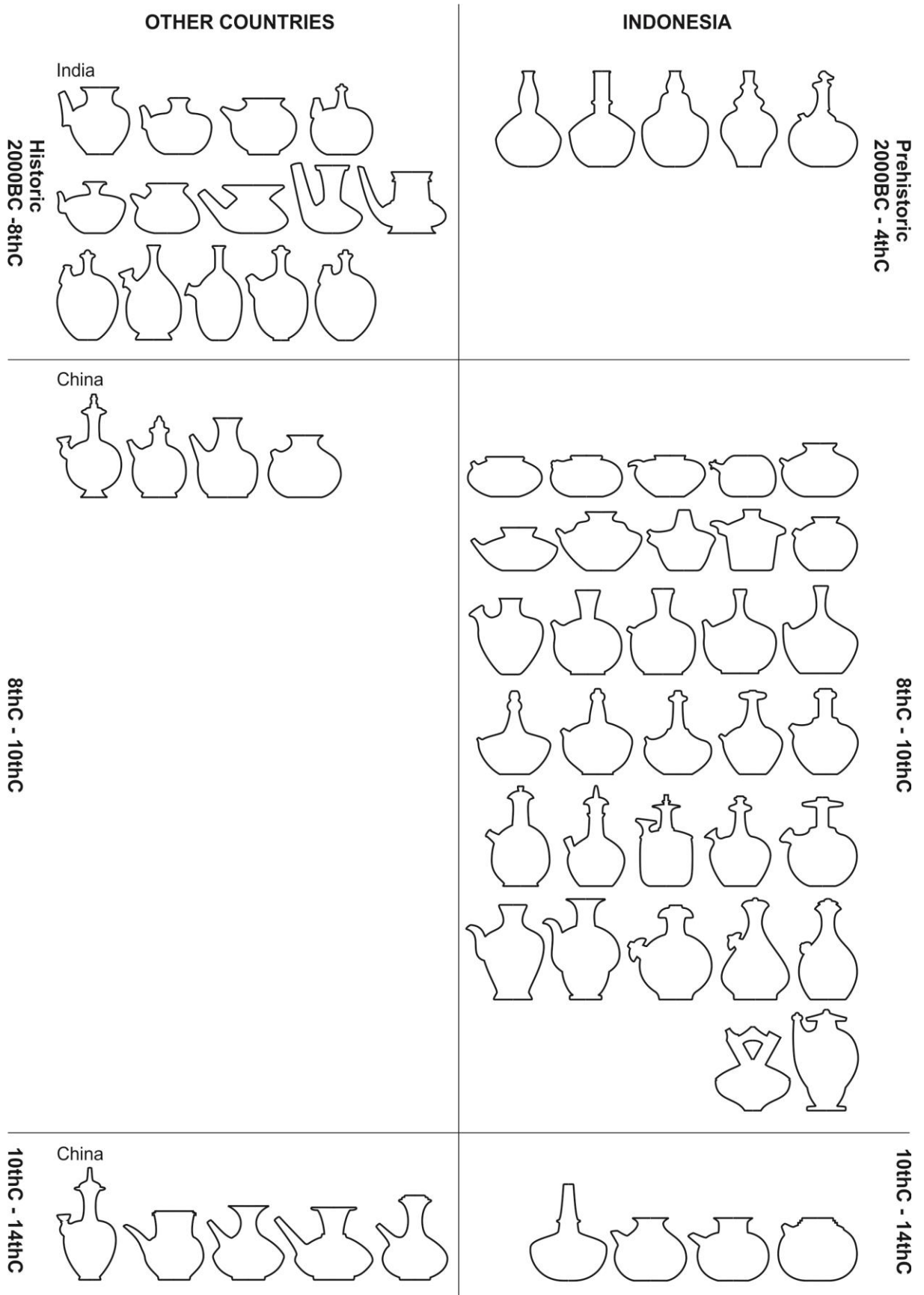


Fig. 3.7. Variant of *kendi* shapes.

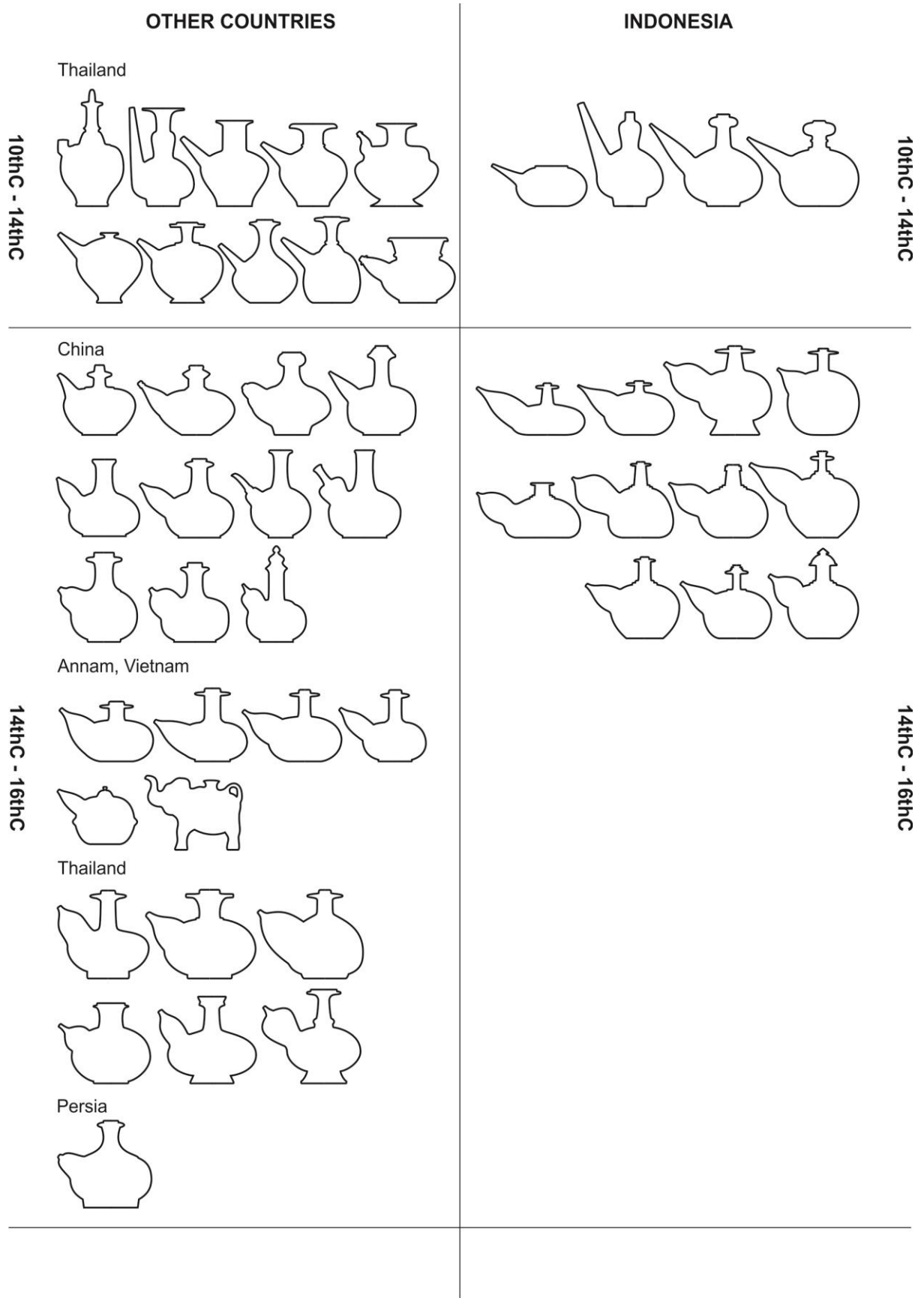
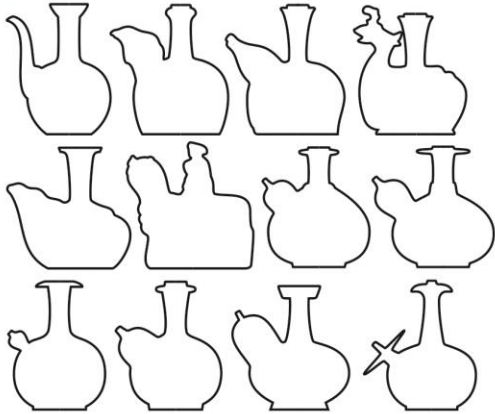


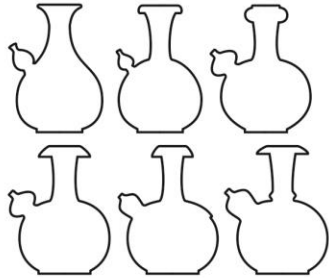
Fig. 3.7. Variant of kendi shapes.

OTHER COUNTRIES

China



Japan



16thC - 18thC

Korea



Persia

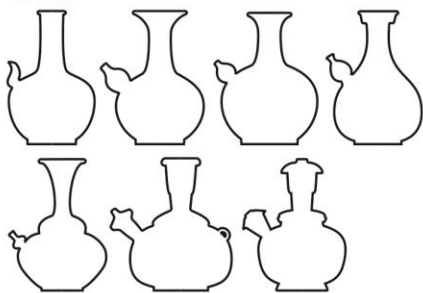


Burma

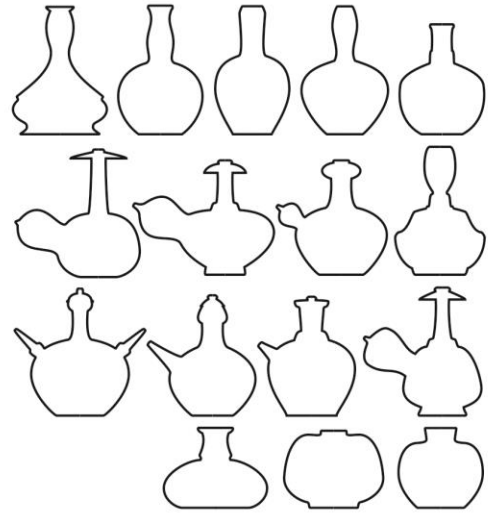


18thC - 20thC

China



INDONESIA



16thC - 18thC

18thC - 20thC

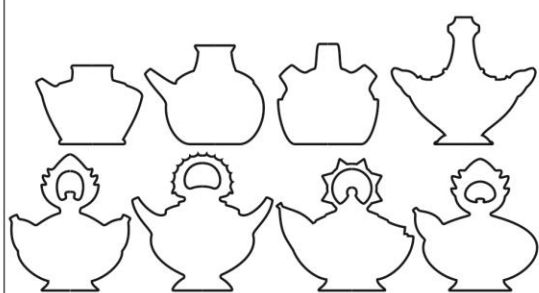


Fig. 3.7. Variant of kendi shapes.

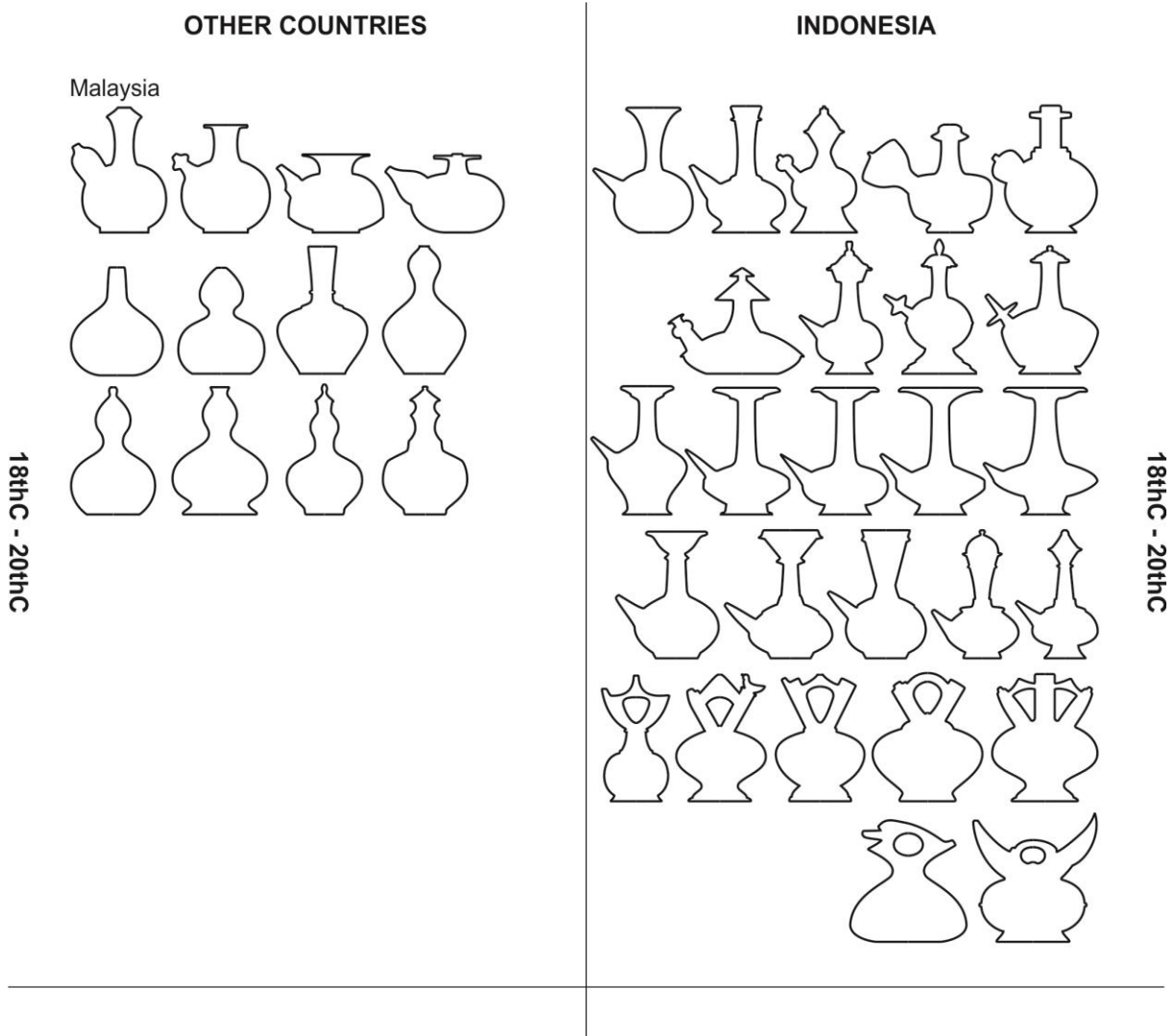


Fig. 3.7. Variant of *kendi* shapes.



Fig. 3.8. *Goma* (胡麻).



Fig. 3.9. *Hidasuki* (緋襷).



Fig. 3.10. *Youhen* (窯変).



Fig. 3.11. *Sangiri* (棧切り).
(<http://www.japanpottery.net>)



Fig. 3.12. *Aobizen/Blue Bizen* (青備前).
(<http://www.artisticnippon.com>)



Fig. 3.13. *Botamochi* (牡丹餅).
(<http://www.bizenrokube.jp>)



Fig. 3.14. *Fuseyaki* (伏せ焼).
(<http://www.touyuukai.jp/monosiri.html>)



Fig. 3.15. *Ishihaze* (石爆).
(<http://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/ryouma66jp/archive/2008/12/11>)

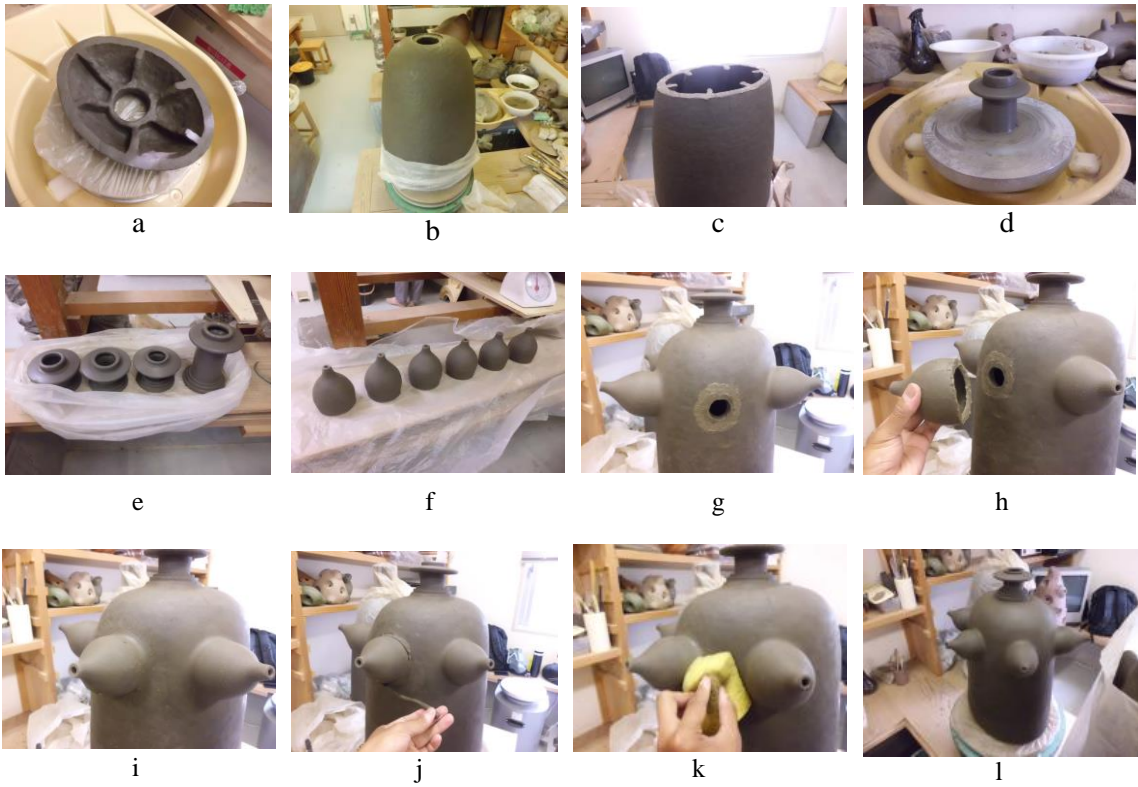


Fig 4.1. Forming process of "sharing" series.

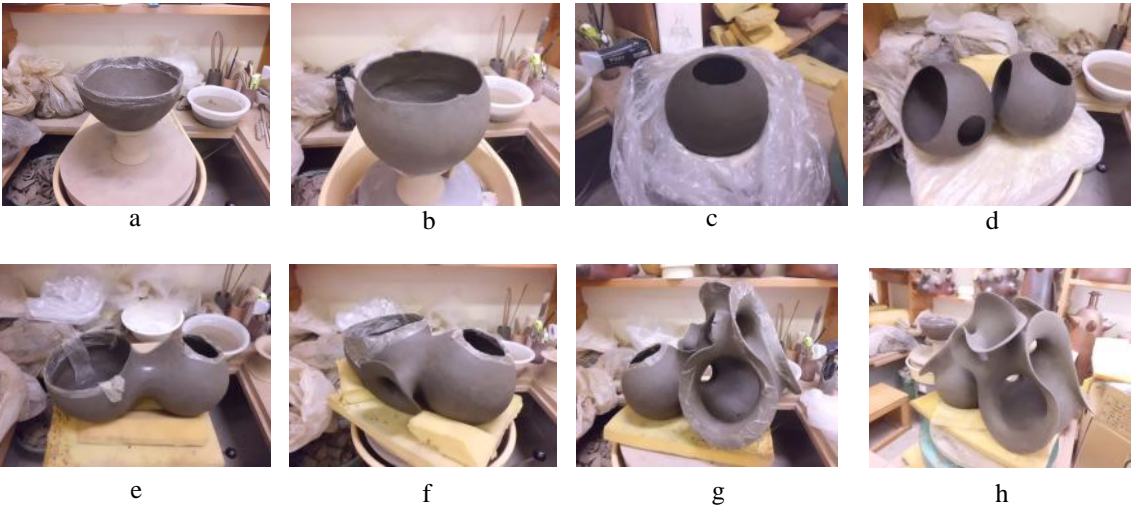


Fig 4.2. Forming process of "connectivity" series.

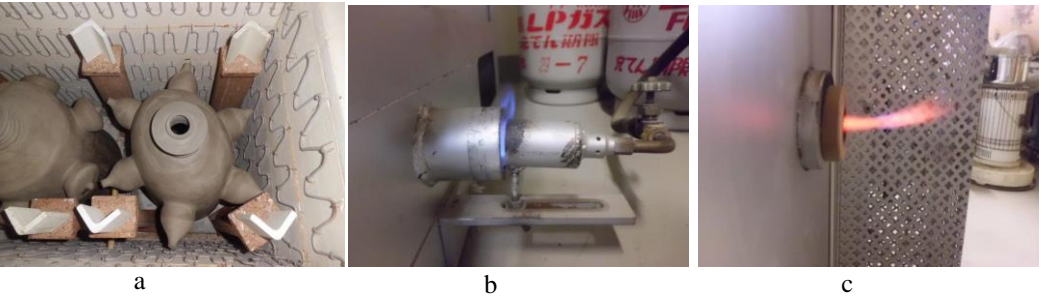


Fig 4.3. Firing process by using electric kiln.

登り窯とは

750年頃、朝鮮から伝わったとされる丘などの傾斜した地形を利用し築かれた穴窯が、1700年頃に仕切り壁を設け改良された窯を登り窯と言う。
各部屋が階段状に連続して、炭が作品全体に行きわたるよう内部の天井は階段型になっている。
作品を置く場所により表面に様々な焼成色が現れることから、備前焼では古くからの登り窯を主流に使っている。現代では穴窯の人気も高まっている。

登り窯の部屋の名称について

「ウト」(一室)、「ウト」(二室)

桃山期の穴窯 (w4×50m) の入口辺りの物を運び込む「運通」と、同じく窯の茶屋辺りを運の抜ける道「煙道」と呼ばれた事から今日に伝承され、登り窯の第一室を「ウト」、煙突に近い二室を「ウト」と呼ばれている。ウトとウトの間に一番、二番と呼ばれる部屋を持つ窯もある。



窯焚きに向う窯の形

備前焼では登り窯で作品を焼く際、油分が多く一定の温度で上げやすい備前炭を主に使っている。
備前炭は備前産の備前炭を主として用いている。備前炭は備前産の備前炭を主として用いている。備前炭は備前産の備前炭を主として用いている。

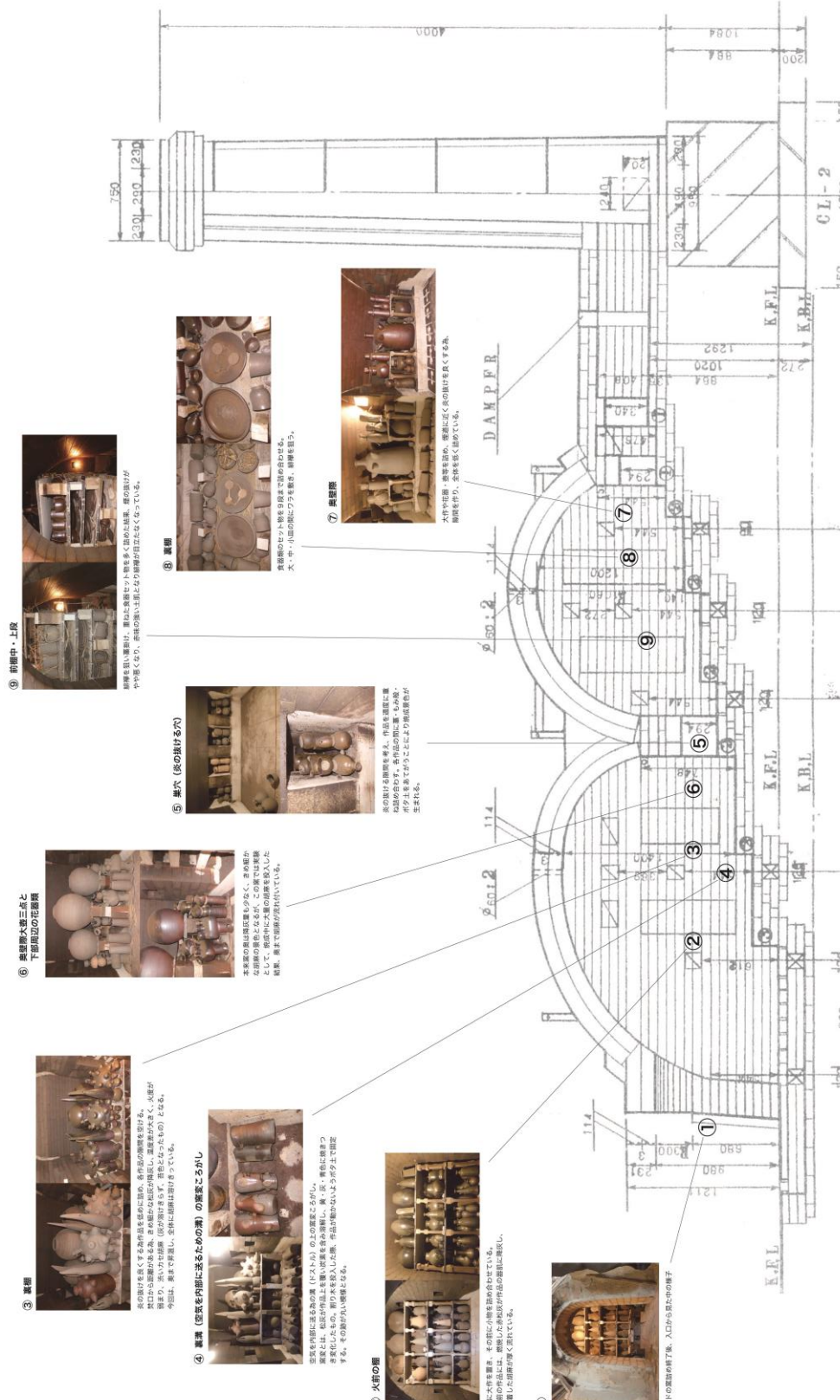


窯焚き後の攻め焚き

窯焚き後は、窯の温度を高く保ち、作品の乾燥を促す。この時期は、窯の温度を高く保ち、作品の乾燥を促す。この時期は、窯の温度を高く保ち、作品の乾燥を促す。

陶土

備前産の陶土は、粘土質で、水分を多く含む。このため、窯の温度を高く保ち、作品の乾燥を促す。この時期は、窯の温度を高く保ち、作品の乾燥を促す。



③ 窯頭

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

④ 窯頭 (窯を内部に送るための溝) の裏面をのぞく

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

⑤ 窯穴 (炭の抜ける穴)

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

⑥ 窯頭大釜三点と下部尻辺の花模様

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

⑦ 窯頭

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

⑧ 窯頭

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

⑨ 窯頭中、上段

窯の入り口で、炭を積み込む場所。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。炭の積み込みは、窯の入り口で行われる。

Fig. 4.4. Diagram of noborigama kiln.

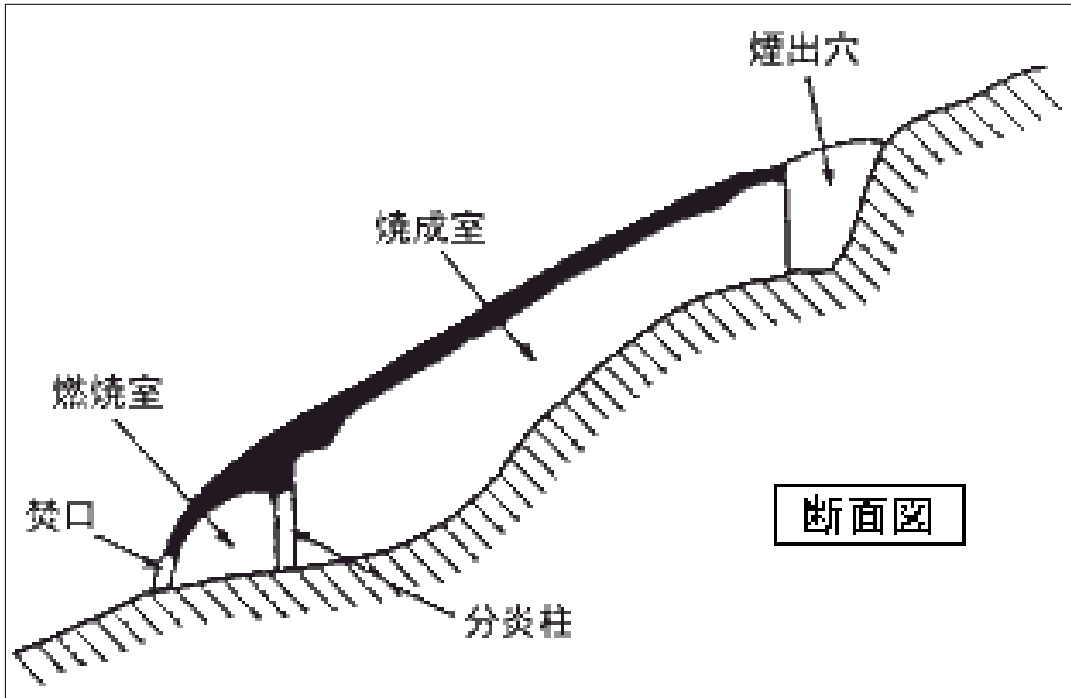


Fig. 4.5. Diagram of *anagama* kiln.



Fig 4.6. Preparation of firewood for *noborigama* firing.



Fig 4.7. Process of loading kiln (窯詰め).





Fig 4.8. Process of firing (窯焼き).





Fig 4.9. Process of unloading kiln (窯出し).

Fig. 4.10. “Sharing” series

			
Title	Sharing #1 「共有」	Title	Sharing #2 「共有」
Year	2013	Year	2013
Size	35 x 38 x 46	Size	32 x 34 x 50
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(1.5%) Goma	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(1.5%)
Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing	Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C

			
Title	Sharing #3 「共有」	Title	Sharing #4 「共有」
Year	2013	Year	2013
Size	34 x 35 x 45	Size	39 x 33 x 66
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(1.5%) Goma	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(1.5%)
Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing	Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C.	Firing	Noborigama (<i>kedo</i>). Oxidation. 1200 °C

			
Title	ケンディの注ぎ口 # 1	Title	ケンディの注ぎ口 # 2
Year	2013	Year	2013
Size	39 x 39 x 38	Size	36 x 39 x 36
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(1.5%) Goma	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(1.5%) Goma
Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing	Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing
Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200 °C	Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200 °C







Title	Multispout #1 「多重注ぎ口」	Title	Multispout #2 「多重注ぎ口」
Year	2013	Year	2013
Size	31 x 31 x 31	Size	33 x 30 x 35
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand (1.5%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand (1.5%)
Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing	Forming	Handbuilding. Throwing
Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C



Title	Multispout #3 「多重注ぎ口」	Title	「組み合わせ」
Year	2013	Year	2013
Size	39 x 28 x 34	Size	49 x 44 x 28
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(3%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Chamotte sand(3%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C

Fig. 4.11. "Connectivity" series

			
Title	Continuity #1 「連続」	Title	Continuity # 2 「連続」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	22 x 20 x 28	Size	21 x 21 x 28
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200°C	Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200°C

			
Title	Continuity #4 「連続」	Title	Continuity # 4 「連続」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	22 x 20 x 31	Size	47 x 25 x 29
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C



Title	Intertwine #1 「からみ合う」	Title	Intertwine #2 「からみ合う」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	31 x 23 x 24	Size	34 x 22 x 32
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (50%) Gendo (50%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Electric kiln. Oxidation. 1180°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C



Title	Expansion#2 「拡大」	Title	Expansion#1 「拡大」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	30 x 35 x 25	Size	25 x 27 x 28
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (50%) Gendo (50%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (50%) Gendo (50%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C



Title	Continuity #4 「連続」	Title	Bidirectional#1 「双方向」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	22 x 20 x 39	Size	28 x 34 x 30
Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) (40%) Gendo (60%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C	Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1100°C



Title	Bidirectional#2 「双方向」	Title	Bidirectional#3 「双方向」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	29 x 40 x 33	Size	31 x 50 x 34
Material	Bizen yama Clay (50%) Gendo (50%)	Material	Bizen yama Clay (50%) Gendo (50%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200°C	Firing	Noborigama (<i>udo</i>). Reduction. 1200°C



Title	Bidirectional#4 「双方向」	Title	Expansion#3 「拡大」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	33 x 37 x 31	Size	27 x 28 x 26
Material	Plered Clay (50%) Gendo (50%)	Material	Bizen Clay (no.2) Gendo (50%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Noborigama (<i>kedo</i>). Reduction. 1100°C	Firing	Noborigama (<i>kedo</i>). Reduction. 1100°C



Title	Expansion#4 「拡大」	Title	Expansion#5 「拡大」
Year	2014	Year	2014
Size	36 x 34 x 28	Size	38 x 26 x 28
Material	Bizen yama Clay (50%) Gendo (50%)	Material	Plered Clay (50%) Gendo (50%)
Forming	Handbuilding	Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Noborigama (<i>kedo</i>). Oxidation. 1100°C	Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C



Title	Expansion#6 「拡大」
Year	2014
Size	28 x 28 x 30
Material	Bizen yama Clay (50%) Gendo (50%)
Forming	Handbuilding
Firing	Electric kiln. Reduction. 1180°C



Fig. 5.1. Artworks publication, solo exhibition at Gallery Kurashiki, December 2014.



Fig. 5.2. Artworks presentation and publication, group exhibition at Museum of Kake, Kurashiki, November 2014.

倉敷芸科大のインドネシア留学生
母国陶芸と融合挑戦
倉敷で備前焼の初個展

備前焼に魅せられて、倉敷芸術科学大大学院で陶芸を学んでいるインドネシアからの留学生ギタ・ウィナタさん(33)が、倉敷市内のギャラリーで初めての個展を開いている。3年間の研究を生かして母国の伝統な水差し「ケンディ」をベース

「作品の空間は過去と未来という時空を表現している」と話すギタさん

に似た造形性豊かな作に興味を持った。中で、大学の登り窯や電気窯品を創作。異なる文化も備前焼特有の深い色を融合させた新たな備前焼に挑んだ成果を披露している。

ギタさんは、インドネシア国立大の陶芸工芸学科でケンディの歴史を研究。ケンディとは持ち手のない水差しで、紀元前から同国で作られていたとされる。現在も使われているという。

研究の過程で、有田焼製ケンディが欧州に渡っていたことを知り、日本の焼き物文化展(倉敷市中央)には、展覧を企画した。

2012年春、インドネシアの国費留学生として、備前焼作家の岡田輝さんが教授を務める倉敷芸術科学大大学院に入学した。日本語を学びながら、多角的に備前焼を研究。来日して陶芸を教える予定というギタさん。

「備前焼で学んだことを生かして、インドネシアの土で新しい陶芸を表現したい」と意欲を見せる。

展示は7日まで。午前10時〜午後6時(最終日は同4時まで)。問い合わせはギャラリー倉敷(086-422-1588)。

(小野寺万由子)

Fig. 5.3. Publication in Sanyoshinbun newspaper, December 5th, 2014.

倉敷芸科大大学院で陶芸学ぶギタさん(インドネシア出身)

**異文化融合
新たな備前焼**

備前焼に魅せられて、倉敷芸術科学大大学院で陶芸を学んでいるインドネシアからの留学生ギタ・ウィナタさん(33)が、倉敷市内のギャラリーで初めての個展を開いている。3年間の研究を生かして母国の伝統な水差し「ケンディ」をベースにした造形性豊かな作品を創作。異なる文化を融合させた新たな備前焼に挑んだ成果を披露している。(小野寺万由子)

初個展 母国の伝統ベース25点

ギタさんは、インドに興味を持った。中で、模して表面に空洞を配ネシア国立大の陶芸工芸学科でケンディの歴史を研究。ケンディとは持ち手のない水差しで、紀元前から同国で作られていたとされる。現在も使われているという。

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「備前焼で学んだことを生かして、インドネシアの土で新しい陶芸を表現したい」と意欲を見せる。

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(小野寺万由子)

Fig. 5.4. Publication in Sanyoshinbun newspaper, December 7th, 2014.