

Term of Reference

Festival Kebudayaan Yogyakarta 2025 / CUSTOMS AND TRADITION
October 11–18, 2025, in Universitas Gunungkidul, Special Region of Yogyakarta

A. Premis Festival

The Yogyakarta Cultural Festival (FKY) 2025 is an event that seeks to formulate a reading of the framework of *“adat istiadat”* (customs and traditions) in Gunungkidul, as a cultural statement on how a cultural region offers models and tactics of sustainability that are organic yet porous to intersections and encounters with other values. Gunungkidul demonstrates that *adat istiadat* is neither frozen in the past nor numb to the inevitability of the future. Here, *adat istiadat* operates as an adaptive form of social infrastructure.

Within the contemporary landscape, the richness of *adate* forms a mode that integrates inherited values with dialogical strategies which, in turn, shape the *kaum lajon*. The *kaum lajon*, through their daily mobility bridging the rural and the urban, transcend the dichotomy between center and periphery. Their movement is a mobility tactic that manages dual resources—urban economic access and rural social cohesion. Thus, Gunungkidul cannot be positioned as a passive periphery but as an entity that transforms the “margins” into bargaining positions, practicing cultural resistance rooted in community solidarity.

Meanwhile, the local expression *“Adoh Ratu, Cedhak Watu”* (“far from the ruler, close to the stone”) gains a sharp political resonance in this context. Being distant from the center of power is not a sign of marginalization but a form of strategic distance to maintain autonomy from central domination. Proximity to nature and community affirms the material and social capital that forms the foundation of sustainability. Therefore, FKY is not merely a recurring cultural festival but a cultural movement.

PROGRAM ETHOS

The implementation of FKY 2025 is built upon an equitable collaboration between the organizing committee/programmers, cultural practitioners/artists, and the local communities of Gunungkidul. The three work synergistically in designing and activating the programs so that residents are not merely passive spectators, but active participants who enliven and amplify the knowledge of *adat istiadat* that grows from their own land.

B. Rembug Program

The **Rembug Program** of FKY is a series of seminars, discussions, and thematic podcasts designed to explore the overarching theme of **FKY 2025: ADOH RATU CEDHAK WATU**. The Rembug Program represents the latest formulation and development from previous FKY editions, now presented through three main components:

- (1) **Wicara**: Thematic discussions featuring selected speakers and specific issues;
- (2) **Siniar**: Thematic podcasts hosted by a regular presenter and featuring guests who discuss lighter, curated topics;
- (3) **Rembug FKY**: A deliberative forum that invites selected figures for an in-depth exchange of ideas.

Building upon these three components, **Rembug FKY: ADOH RATU CEDHAK WATU** will address core issues of knowledge within the cultural landscape of Yogyakarta, particularly those interwoven with this year's focus: **Traditions and Customs** (*Adat Istiadat*). Through this letter, we cordially invite you to take part in the **WICARA PROGRAM**, details of which are as follows:

a. Tittle of the Wicara

TRADITIONS/TENSIONS: RETHINKING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE TODAY

b. List of Speakers/Contributor

KULAS UMO

(Pangcah Ritual Practitioner (Sikawasay), Community Representative, and Cultural Researcher, Fata'an, Taiwan)

PANAY MULU

(Director-General of the Department of Indigenous Affairs, Taoyuan City Government)

SITA HIDAYAH

(Lecturer in Anthropology, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada)

Moderator :

SYAFIATUDINA

(Kunci Study Forum and Collective)

c. Topic Material

Wicara Program: *"TRADITION/TENSIONS: Rethinking Indigenous Knowledge Today"* opens a critical dialogue on the encounter between local wisdom and the challenges of modernity. Yogyakarta, as a cultural and intellectual hub in Indonesia, offers a living example of how indigenous knowledge continues to evolve, intertwining the traditional and the contemporary. Rather than being a relic of the past, the region's cultural practices reveal a dynamic continuity where old values are constantly negotiated, reinterpreted, and transformed to address present-day realities.

The "Tradition/Tensions" exhibition of 1996 highlighted the complex interplay between cultural heritage and contemporary realities in Asian art, drawing attention to the challenges artists face in negotiating the preservation of tradition amid rapid modernization and globalization. The theme underscored tensions between historical legacies and new social, political, and environmental conditions, positioning art as a critical space for exploring these dynamics. However, it also posed difficulties by framing these issues through binaries like "traditional versus modern" or "East versus West," which could inadvertently simplify and exoticize rich, diverse artistic expressions across different Asian contexts.

Critics have pointed out that while the exhibition aimed to break down simplistic categorizations, it sometimes fell into reproducing them, particularly by framing Asian contemporary art through a lens of cultural otherness or hybridity as a finished state rather than an ongoing negotiation. The curatorial approach, though innovative, could risk imposing an ethnographic narrative that emphasized difference in ways that overshadowed the historical agency and contextual specificity of the artists' work. It also limited the possibility of seeing these art practices as part of broader global dialogues about modernity and social change, instead placing them in a somewhat static dichotomy between preservation and transformation.

Using the "Tradition/Tensions" theme as a framework for a seminar/wicara programme at Gunungkidul University on indigenous knowledge today offers a valuable opportunity to critically engage with how indigenous communities navigate the preservation of ancestral wisdom amid contemporary pressures such as globalization, environmental challenges, and socio-political change. The theme encourages seminar participants to explore how indigenous knowledge systems are not static relics but dynamic and evolving bodies of knowledge that

respond creatively to modern tensions. It invites reflection on the balance between safeguarding cultural heritage and embracing innovation, fostering a dialogue that bridges traditional wisdom and contemporary realities in local and global contexts. This approach can deepen understanding of cultural resilience and the transformative potential of indigenous knowledge in today’s world.

Furthermore, the discussion engages comparative insights from the experiences of indigenous communities beyond Indonesia, particularly Taiwan’s Amis Nation. The conversation will highlight the interconnected struggles and creative adaptations of indigenous peoples in redefining identity, reclaiming language, and revitalizing cultural memory amidst global modernization. This comparative approach allows for a deeper understanding of how local wisdom traditions, whether Javanese or Amis, share common values of relationality, care for the land, and collective responsibility that can inspire new models of cultural resilience.

The speakers, **Kulas Umo**, Pangcah Ritual Practitioner (Sikawasay), Community Representative, and Cultural Researcher, Fata’an, Taiwan; **Panay Mulu**, Director-General of the Department of Indigenous Affairs, Taoyuan City Government; and **Sita Hidayah**, Lecturer in Anthropology, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, will contribute perspectives from their respective disciplines and lived experiences. Together, they will unfold discussions on how indigenous identity is being renegotiated through education, activism, and artistic expression; how cultural practices function as both resistance and renewal; and how Yogyakarta’s living traditions can converse with global indigenous movements. Ultimately, this session aims to provoke a collective reflection on the role of indigenous knowledge in shaping the contemporary imagination of culture. By revisiting and rethinking local wisdom not as static heritage but as a transformative and dialogic force, this wicara aspires to situate Yogyakarta within a broader global discourse of decolonial knowledge-making and sustainable cultural futures.

C. Event Rundown

MONDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2025 09.30-12.00 WIB					
NO	TIME		DURATION	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
1	9.30	09.40	10 minutes	REGISTRATION	Participant registration
2	09:40	09:50	10 minutes	OPENING BY MODERATOR	The moderator opened the event, and invited all the keynote speakers to sit on the main bench. The invite the audience to pray before the discussion
3	09:50	10:00	10 minutes	OPENING SPEECH BY RECTOR OF UNIVERSITAS GUNUNGKIDUL	The moderator invited the chancellor to give a speech.
4	10.00	11.00	60 minutes	DISCUSSION	The moderator initiates and leads the discussion with speakers and participants
5	11.00	11.55	55 minutes	Q&A SESSION	The moderator opens the floor for participant questions

6	11.55	12.00	5 minutes	CLOSING	The moderator concludes the session
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D. Contact Person

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