

## Transformation of Abimanyu's Character in Serat Wirawiyata

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### ABSTRACT

Serat as a literary work has its own uniqueness. Authors often transform or adapt stories in their writing. One of the literary works that contains transformation is *Serat Wirawiyata*. *Serat Wirawiyata* is a work of Mangkunegara IV which contains the teachings of warriors in which transforms the character Abimanyu to be used as a role model. This research is qualitative research with interpretative-descriptive research method. The type of research is library research. The theories used in this research are literary reception theory and intertextual. Primary data in this research is the transformation of Abimanyu's character in *Serat Wirawiyata* while secondary data in this research includes data obtained from books, articles, and documents related to the research. The result of this research is that in *Serat Wirawiyata* there is a transformation of Abimanyu character, the intention of the transformation of Abimanyu character is in order to change the concept of *darma* into *karma* with the aim as a teaching material for soldiers in carrying out their duties and obligations.

**Keywords:** Animism, Dynamism, Islam Nusantara, Pre-Islam, Syncretism

## INTRODUCTION

*Serat* or manuscript is a literary work that holds a variety of information and knowledge. Serat as a literary work holds uniqueness and a world of its own that is deliberately created by the author. Al-Ma'ruf & Nugrahani (2017), state that literary works are a medium for an author to pour his ideas into writing. So that between one author and another author has its own differences and uniqueness.

In writing literary works, authors often make adaptations in the process of creating literary works. In this case, Aristotle in Luxemburg, et al (1984) formulated the theory of creation which explains that mimesis is a creative process carried out by the artist (poet) and not just a copying activity. Thus, various genres of literary works were born that were inspired, inspired and adapted from pre-existing literary works, then changed or adapted them into a new form.

Stories that serve as inspiration include mythology, folklore, or cultural traditions. This transformation can involve changes in plot, character, setting, or even theme, according to the vision or purpose of the author doing the adaptation. Nowadays, there are many literary works that transform puppet characters and stories as the content or storyline (Junus, 1985). These literary works include



novels such as *Amba* (Laksmi Pamuntjak, 2012), *Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin* (Sindhunata, 1983), and *Bhisma Dewabrata* (Triatmoko, 2019). In addition to new literary works such as novels and short stories, the transformation of puppet characters and stories can also be seen in old literary works carried out by poets at that time.

One of the poets and kings who transformed puppet stories and characters in his work was KGPAA Mangkunegara IV. The transformation is found in some of his works, especially in *piwulang* literature such as in *Serat Tripama*. In *Serat Tripama* there is a transformation of puppet characters namely Patih Suwanda, Raden Kumbakarna and Adipati Karna in the form of character transformation of each character (Utorowati et al., 2019). This phenomenon is also seen in another *piwulang* literary work by Mangkunegara IV, namely *Serat Wirawiyata*, so researchers are interested in researching it. In *Serat Wirawiyata*, several characters are raised as role models, one of which is Abimanyu, who is a puppet character from the Mahabharata epic.

*Serat Wirawiyata* is one of the *piwulang* literary works by Mangkunegara IV which contains teachings for soldiers, where a soldier must be loyal to obligations, serve the leader without disappointing him and submit to State regulations. In addition to the teachings for the soldiers, this fiber also contains teachings for the commanders (*senapati*) who oversee the soldiers. Endraswara (2008) explains that a literary work is created with various purposes, among others, as a means of instilling moral and ethical values. *Serat Wirawiyata* is written using Javanese script in the form of poetry or *tembang* and consists of 2 (two) *pupuh tembang Macapat*, namely 1) *Pupuh Sinom* consists of 42 stanzas and 2) *Pupuh Pangkur* consists of 14 stanzas.

Previous research related to similar topics and data include; 1) Fransisca (2011) in her thesis entitled Patriotism in *Serat Wirawiyata* which explains the values of patriotism in *Serat Wirawiyata*, 2) Budhisantoso et al (1990) in a book entitled *Serat Wirawiyata* which contains a content study related to the values and teachings contained in *Serat Wirawiyata*, 3) Utorowati et al (2019) entitled Transformation of Puppet Character in *Serat Tripama* Karya Mangkunegara IV. The study contains the process of transforming the character of puppet characters in *Serat Tripama*, namely the figures of Patih Suwanda, Raden Kumbakarna and Adipati Karna, 4) Pramulia (2016) entitled Transformation of Wayang Kulit Stories into Mini Stories as a Child Character Development Media, in the study explained the transformation of shadow puppet stories because it serves to convey the values in shadow puppet stories to children. Based on the previous description, research related to the transformation of *Serat Wirawiyata* has never been done so that it can be continued.

## METHOD

This research is qualitative research using descriptive-interpretative approach. This research method is library research with a reception and intertext approach in order to reveal the transformation of Abimanyu's character in *Serat Wirawiyata*. The data collection technique is by listening, reading, and recording. Primary data in this research is the transformation of Abimanyu's character in *Serat*

*Wirawiyata* while secondary data in this research includes data obtained from books, articles, and documents related to the research.

Literary reception theory is used in this study related to the transformation of puppetry elements in literary works cannot be separated from the author's reading or reception of the puppetry culture itself (Al-Ma'ruf & Nugrahani, 2017). Meanwhile, the use of intertextual theory is related to the transformation that cannot be separated from the relationship between texts in other previous works.

The concept of literary reception refers to the way readers or audiences respond to and interpret a literary work. According to Junius (1985) Literary (aesthetic) reception can be interpreted or synonymized with literary response and can be interpreted as a response or how readers interpret the literary works they read. Readers are an important factor and play a central role in literary studies as subjects and objects (Teeuw, 1984).

Meanwhile, the concept of intertextuality refers to the relationship and interaction between one literary work and other literary works. According to Teeuw (1984) there is no text that stands independently because the text written is based on texts written previously, the relationship with other texts is used as a kind of example, reference, example or framework in writing. Nurgiyantoro (1998) further explains that the concept of intertext itself can be a relationship between intertextual and extertextual, namely the relationship between literary texts and texts outside of literature including authors, readers and socio-cultural contexts.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The discussion of this research is the transformation of puppet characters in Mangkuengara IV's work entitled *Serat Wirawiyata*. The existence of the transformation of puppet characters is also motivated by the style of authorship of Mangkunegara IV itself in perceiving Javanese culture, especially wayang stories. The puppet character transformed by Mangkunegara IV in *Serat Wirawiyata* is the character Abimanyu with the aim of providing a message in the form of Abimanyu's example of soldiering. The description of the results and discussion of this research are as follows:

### Authorship of Mangkunegara IV

Mangkunegara IV also known as KGPAA Mangkuengara IV was the king of Mangkunegara who reigned in 1781-1810 Java or 1853 AD - 1881 AD (Pigeaud, 1927). Mangkunegara IV was a successful king in running the government of Mangkunegaran. Many developments both from the system of government, economy, culture to the field of literary works during his reign. According to Soebardi in Susilantini & Mumfangati (1997) explains that in addition to being a king, Mangkunegara IV is also a poet (writer), even recognized as a poet, expert in thought and as an expert in the field of mysticism.

As a king, Mangkuengara IV did not write his own works, but mandated the scribe's servants to write them as evidenced by the information on some of his literary works related to the name of the

author and author. The period of authorship of Mangkunegara IV can be divided into three periods. The first period is the writing of works in the period between 1770-1785 Java (1842-1856M). The second period is the period of writing in the period between 1785-1800 Java (1856 AD-1871 AD). The third period is the period of writing in the period 1800-1810 Java (1871-1881 AD) (Pringgokusuma, 1987). In the division of the period, it was in the third period that many literary works by Mangkunegara IV were born.

Mangkunegara IV gave birth to various kinds of literary works, especially in the form of *piwulang* literature. Pigeaud in Taruna (1975) divides Mangkunegara IV's works in the field of literature into 4 (four types) namely: works in the form of stories or narration, works containing education and teaching or *piwulang*, works in the form of letters, (iber) and works in the form of poetry of art and culture. According to Sudewa (1991), *piwulang* literature is a literary work in which moral teachings and life attitudes are contained. The teachings contained in *piwulang* literature can be applied in everyday life. This is in line with the opinion of Robson (1978) who explains that the information or knowledge contained in old literary works can be used as teaching materials in the past and for the present for things that are still relevant.

Mangkunegara IV's *piwulang* literature as a whole is in the form of moral teachings in living everyday life. These teachings include how to be a wife, child, soldier, palace official, and how to live a good life in relation to worshipping God. The results of Mangkunegara IV's work were compiled into one entitled *Serat-Serat Anggitan Dalem KGPA Mangkunegara IV* which consisted of IV volumes. Mangkunegara's work was compiled by Pigeaud (1953) between 1927 and 1934 on the orders of Mangkunegara VII as an offering for Mangkunegara IV's 120th birthday (Susilantini & Mumfangati, 1997).

### **Transformation of Abimanyu in *Serat Wirawiyata***

*Serat Wirawiyata* is one of the *piwulang* literary works by KGPA Mangkunegara IV which contains teachings for soldiers, where a soldier must be loyal to duty, serve the leader without disappointing him and submit to State regulations. In addition to the teachings for the soldiers, this fiber also contains teachings for the commanders (*senapati*) who supervise the soldiers. *Serat Wirawiyata* is written using Javanese script in the form of poetry or *tembang* and consists of 2 (two) *pupuh* *tembang* *Macapat*, namely 1) *Pupuh Sinom* consists of 42 stanzas and 2) *Pupuh Pangkur* consists of 14 stanzas.

In *Serat Wirawiyata* there is a colophon that contains the time of writing the manuscript and can be seen in the following excerpt:

*Sri nata dera makirtya*  
*Wirawiyata nujwari*  
*Rêspati date sapisan*  
*Sasi Saban wuku Wukir*  
*Ehe sangkalèng warsi*

*Murtyastha amulang sunu*

*Asung wasiyat putra*

*Jêng Gusti Pangran Dipati*

*Arya Mangkunagara ingkang kaping pat*

(Source: Serat Wirawiyata Pupuh I Sinom, 1st stanza, in Budhisantoso et al (1990))

Based on the colophon above, the writing time of *Serat Wirawiyata* manuscript is written on Thursday, the 1st day of the month of Saban (*Ruwah*) coinciding with the *wuku Wukir* of Ehe year with the *sengkalan* “*Murtyastha Amulang Sunu*” which dates back to 1788 AJ. In the Gregorian calendar that is on Thursday, February 23, 1860. In *Serat Wirawiyata*, there is a transformation of a puppet character as a role model. According to KBBI (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2023), transformation is a change in form, nature, function and so on. Transformation also means change. According to Nurgiyantoro (2010) explains that the key meaning of transformation is change, namely changes to a thing or situation. Pudentia in Pramulia (2016), explains that transformation related to literary works, namely, changes in literary works in the form of changes in story structures, characters, settings, themes, etc.

The transformation of the character Abimnyu in *Serat Wirawiyata* is found in *Pupuh Sinom* stanza 30-31 and stanza 35. This can be seen in the following quote:

*Lungguhing para prawira*

*Yèn ana madyaning jurit*

*Nora wênang duwe karsa*

*Ragane pama jêmparing*

*Kang musthi senapati*

*Ing sakarsa kang pinanduk*

*Linêpas ywa sarănta*

*Angsahira dèn mranani*

*Maring mungsuh aja keguh ing bêbaya*

(Source: Serat Wirawiyata pupuh Sinom stanza 30, in Budhisantoso et al (1990))

*Dèn kadi Sang Partasuta*

*Bimanyu kala tinuding*

*Mangrura kang gêlar cakra*

*Dening Sang Yudhisthira Ji*

*Sukaning tyas tan sipi*

*Dupi rinoban ing mungsuh*

*Kèsthi trahing satriya*

*Wêdi wirang wani pati*

*Veka mǎngka tampiling para prawira*

(Source: *Serat Wirawiyata pupuh Sinom*, 31st stanza, in Budhisantoso et al (1990))

*Wus ana kayaktènira*

*Sang Partasuta ing nguni*

*Palastra anèng palagan*

*Anganis lègawaning ati*

*Wit dènnya anglabuhi*

*Pandhawa manggiha unggul*

*Puwarantuk nugraha*

*Sira wau Partasiwi*

*Turunipun angratoni tanah Jawa*

(Source: *Serat Wirawiyata pupuh Sinom* stanza 35, in Budhisantoso et al (1990))

The quote above tells that Abimanyu was appointed as a warlord (*senapati*) by Prabu Yudhistira in the Bharatayudha war. The Bharatayudha war itself was a war between the Pandawa and the Kurawa. Abimanyu, who was appointed as a warlord, then advanced to the battlefield and faced the Kurawa who at that time was forming a war formation called *Cakra wyuha*.

*Cakra wyuha* itself is a circular war formation to surround the enemy. Abimanyu who had been trapped in *Cakra wyuha* could not get out of the Kurawa army. As a descendant of a satriya and having a satriya character, he was not at all afraid of the rampage of the Kurawa troops. In the end Abimanyu died with wounds that filled his entire body (*tatu arang kranjang*). Abimanyu died as a hero of the nation to defend the Pandawa and received a gift in the form of descendants who would bring down the kings of Java.

The story of Abimanyu's death in the Bharatayudha war is a story sourced from the Mahabarata epic Sutardjo (2017) explains that the Mahabarata is a book that contains a war between the Pandawa and the Kurawa and in the Drunaparwa section one of the contents tells the story of Abimanyu's death. From this it can be concluded that there are similarities in the content of the text about the death of Abimanyu in the two texts, in other words, the old texts inspired the birth of new texts. From the explanation above, the author's intention in transforming the character of Abimanyu is so that soldiers and warlords can imitate and emulate the character, character and behavior of Abimanyu. The character of a tough soldier, obedient to the king's orders, an attitude of defending the country and nationalism, and responsibility for the mandate or position even if it has to sacrifice his life.

In writing literary works, especially *piwulang* literature, the intention of transforming puppet characters is also inseparable because puppets are a great heritage that contains teachings and philosophies of life. The transformation of puppet characters in literary works as *piwulang* literature will certainly override the ugliness or shortcomings of these characters. In *Serat Wirawiyata*, Abimanyu is not only transformed into literature to be emulated, but also eliminates Abimanyu's bad traits. This

can be seen in the following quote:

*“Madêg ing nagari Wiratha, Prabu Maswapati, miyos ing pāncaniti, ingadhêp Radèn Arya Seta, Radèn Arya Utara, tuwin Radèn Wratsangka, tuwin pêpak para Pandhawa. Ingkang rinêmbag, Pandhawa masrahakên Radèn Abimanyu, sang prabu lajêng ngirid Radèn Abimanyu, kapanggihakên lan Rêtna Untari, pondhongan. Dèrèng ngantos dumugi ing jinêmrîk, kasarû dhatêngipun Kalabêndana saking gêgana, lajêng cariyos, Āṅkawijaya, aku dikongkon bojomu Siti Sêndari, kowe dikon mulih mênyang Pringgadani. Kalabêndana nuntên dipun suduk dening Radèn Abimanyu, tatu jajanipun, lajêng ngoncati. Dêwi Untari matur, kadospundi dene radèn sampun kagungan garwa. Wangsulaniipun, iku buta gêndhêng, ngayawara, yèn aku goroh besuk prang Bratayuda muga tatuku arang kranjang. Lajêng pondhongan” (Mangkunegara VII, 1930)*

The above quote is a fragment of Serat Pedhalangan Ringgit Purwa in the play (story) *Kalabendana Pejah/Lena*. It tells that at that time Abimanyu was in the country of Wiratha and was making out with Dewi Utari. When both of them were making out, Kalabendana came and said to Abimanyu that his arrival was sent by Abimanyu's wife named Siti Sendari. Siti Sendari told Kalabendana that Abimanyu should immediately return to Pringgadani. Abimanyu who felt afraid then stabbed Kalabendana in the chest until he was injured and Kalabendana then hurried away.

Dewi Utari who felt uneasy and confused over Kalabendana's words then asked Abimanyu about Kalabendana's words. Abimanyu then denied Kalabendana's words and stated that Kalabendana was a mad rasaksa and so his words were incoherent. Abimanyu also swore to Dewi Utari that he was single and if he was proven to be lying then he would die in the Bharatayudha war with wounds all over his body. In another version of the pedhalangan, it is also told that Abimanyu swore to diranjap arrow sewu which means to die with thousands of arrows stuck in his body.

Besides the karma of his vow to Dewi Utari. Another karma of Abimanyu dying at a young age is also seen in the wayang story entitled Semar Kuning. According to Harinuksmo in Tjahyadi (2009), the story of Semar Kuning is part of a carangan play that is often performed and is classified as a popular play. In the story of Semar Kuning, Abimanyu at that time dared to spit on the pigtail of Semar's head which was the embodiment of Sanghyang Ismaya because he received orders from Prabu Kresna (Harinuksmo in Tjahyadi, 2009). Furthermore, in the Semar *Kuning* presented by Ki Bayu Aji in 2017, Semar who was shocked and saddened by Abimanyu's actions then said “how come this is the behavior of Abimanyu, dare to spit on my keys, I wonder how long this child will live” (Pak Utis youtube Chanel, minute 1:26:05). The words of Semar, who is the embodiment of the god, are then proven in the form of Abimanyu's death in the Bharatayudha war at a young age.

Based on the explanation above, the transformation of Abimanyu in *Serat Wirawiyata* also changes the concept of karma into an example. Abimanyu's death in the Bharatayudha war is basically

the karma of the lies and deeds he did during his lifetime. The Bharatayudha war itself, apart from meaning a war between the Bharata descendants, the Pandawa and Kurawa, also means a holy war involving the karma of life in the form of; whoever plants will reap, whoever is wrong will lose and whoever borrows must return.

### **The Transformation Intention of Abimanyu in *Serat Wirawiyata***

According to Nurgiyantoro (2008) the author's intention is also related to the author's intention in writing a literary work. *Serat Wirawiyata* as a work of *piwulang* literature is constructed in such a way as to provide a teaching in living life. The sociocultural background of Mangkunegara IV contributes to the construction of his literary work. Mangkunegara IV's background as a king and a cultured Javanese has an impact on the literary works he created, mostly *piwulang* literary works that contain various kinds of teachings or values. In addition, with this background, it also has an impact on some of his works that transform wayang stories as role models. This is supported by the opinion of Stael in Wiyatmi (2013) explaining that the creation of a literary work and the development of literary works are closely related to the subject of the creator and the reading public as connoisseurs who cannot be separated by the context of natural conditions and the socio-cultural environment.

The use of wayang as an exemplary role model in literary works certainly does not escape the role of wayang itself. According to Mulyono (1982) wayang is a picture of human life from birth to the end of life so that it contains the concept of spectacle, guidance, and order. So that wayang contains moral values of life teachings that can be applied in everyday life and are timeless. The transformation of puppet elements that appear in a literary work is indirectly the result of the author's reception of the puppet world itself. This is reinforced by Wiryamartama in Nurgiyantoro (1998) explaining that the reception that occurs causes the presence or birth of new texts that have been processed with creativity and there is a transformation of the aspects of puppetry in the work.

The presence of *Serat Wirawiyata*, which was created to be used as a guideline for soldiers, cannot be separated from the background of Mangkunegara IV who had a military background. Susilantini & Mumfangati (1997) explains that Mangkunegara IV's expertise as a poet was also influenced by the conditions and situations of his environment such as his life experiences during his military duties.

The choice of Abimanyu in *Serat Wirawiyata* is inseparable from the character and who Abimanyu is. In the concept of legitimacy of Javanese kings, Abimanyu is present because he is the son of Arjuna who is believed to be the descendant of Javanese kings. This concept is often referred to as the concept of pangiwa and panengen. According to Sulistiono (2015) The cult of Arjuna as the ancestor of the Mataram dynasty in Babad Tanah Jawi cannot be separated from the mythology of the Javanese belief that Arjuna and his son, Abimanyu, will inherit revelations in the form of Mahkutarama and Cakraningrat revelations, where in the view of Javanese culture the two revelations are believed to be a source of strength for the king in holding power.



In terms of characterization, the intention of Mangkunegara IV is also inseparable from the character or character possessed by Abimanyu to be emulated by the soldiers when carrying out their duties and mandates. The values of Abimanyu's character in *Serat Wirawiyata* are as follows:

a. **Value of Courage**

The value of courage in the character Abimanyu is depicted when he dares to advance on the battlefield of Bharatayudha against the Kurawa. Abimanyu's courage was realized when he bravely penetrated the Kurawa line, which at that time was using the Cakrawhuya war formation which is notoriously difficult to penetrate.

b. **Value of Responsibility**

The value of responsibility in Abimanyu's character is illustrated when he is responsible for his duties as a warlord and as a ksatriya so he dares to take risks on the battlefield even though his life is at stake

c. **The Value of Obedience**

Abimanyu's obedience was reflected when he was ordered and appointed as a warlord. Even though he was still young he did not refuse and retreat and even accepted it happily. His obedience to Prabu Yudhistira's orders required him to penetrate the Kurawa ranks alone and fall on the battlefield which in the end he died a hero for the Pandawa side.

## CONCLUSION

Mangkunegara IV was a king and poet who produced many kinds of literary works, especially *piwulang* literature. One of these works is *Serat Wirawiyata*. *Serat Wirawiyata* is a work by Mangkunegara IV written in macapat poems consisting of 2 (two) poems, namely *pupuh Sinom* (42 verses) and *pupuh Pangkur* (14 verses). *Serat Wirawiyata* contains teachings for soldiers and commanders of soldiers in carrying out their duties and obligations. In *Serat Wirawiyata* there is a transformation of the puppet character, namely Abimanyu, in order to be a role model for the soldiers. The transformation of puppet elements in Mangkunegara IV's work is influenced by various aspects including socio-culture, reception and intertext that he did to the culture and puppet stories. Mangkunegara IV's intention to transform Abimanyu also changed the concept of the law of dharma or karma into an example. The values contained in the transformation of Abimanyu are the values of courage, responsibility and obedience.

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