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Gamelan Reog Ponorogo Accompaniment as a Symbol of Communication in The Power of Javanese Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses its analysis on how the Reog Ponorogo gamelan instruments is able to represent symbols communication of Javanese leadership power. The research is a type of field research, and was conducted in three regions, namely Surakarta, Magetan, and Ponorogo. The research method was conducted in an interpretive qualitative way, with a symbolic interpretive approach technique that bases its analysis on the interpretation and meaning of cultural symbols, which are expressed through the interaction of taste, emotionality, spirituality, rationality and morality in the communication process. For this reason, in conducting research, researchers combine data from the findings of data in the field, with theories and literature data related to the object of research. Data collection efforts are carried out interactively through in-depth interview methods, and are carried out continuously until they reach data saturation. As for the determination of sources, researchers used purposive sampling technique, which is a sampling technique based on certain considerations. The results of the study found three powers of Javanese leadership, namely the power of authority, the power of wisdom or kawicaksanan, and the spiritual power or kawaskithan represented in the accompaniment of Reog Ponorogo music. All of these lead to the concept of Panaragan, or the concept of understanding one's identity.

Keywords: Warok, Reog Ponorogo, Panaragan, Leadership

INTRODUCTION

The study of communication science certainly cannot be separated from the use of communication media as a message channel to construct, produce and visualise ideas and human thoughts. Selection in the use of communication media, of course, must pay attention to when, where, and by whom the communication process takes place. From there, it can finally be determined the type of use of communication media appropriately, so that the hope is that the communication process can produce messages according to the wishes of the communication actors. Of course, the development of the use of communication media also cannot be separated from the periodisation and history of its use itself (Littlejohn et.al, 2017: 146).

The use of traditional art as a traditional communication medium is certainly not a new thing to do. The use of traditional communication media is usually hereditary, while maintaining the values of tradition, belief, morality, spirituality and local customs that are deeply rooted, and can also be egalitarian. This is because the use of traditional communication media is usually also populist, which can be applied and carried out to anyone regardless of social strata (Dundes, 1965: 3). This is also the case with the Reog Ponorogo art performance, which originated from the Ponorogo region, East Java. Reog Ponorogo itself is a traditional art form, which can be used as a traditional communication medium to convey various messages.

This research focuses on how the Reog Ponorogo musical accompaniment is able to represent symbols of Javanese leadership power. The story of Reog Ponorogo itself consists of two versions. The first is a version with a historical approach, which is the story between the ruler of Wengker, Ki Ageng Suryangalam, and Bathara Katong. This interpretation also tells the story of Ki Ageng Suryangalam's insinuation to Prabu Brawijaya V, a King from Majapahit, to be firm and wise in carrying out his duties as a King. The insinuation is symbolised through a dance image of a tiger with a peacock perched on its head. Eventually, the performance developed into the Reog Ponorogo performance that it is today (Poerwowijoyo, 1985:9).

The second version is the legendary version, the story of Prabu Klana Sewandana, who had to face Patih Singa Barong in order to propose to Dewi Sangga Langit. However, in its development, only the legendary story of Singa Barong and Klana Sewandana became the reference in the Reog Ponorogo performance for now. Ki Ageng Suryangalam's version, on the other hand, has only become a kind of historical data reference for various studies. The Reog Ponorogo performance itself is closely related to the presence of a traditional Ponorogo figure, who is called the *Warok*. The presence of *Warok* is believed to originate from the history of Ki Ageng Suryangalam, who became the ruler of the Wengker region, before finally changing its name to Ponorogo. Ki Ageng Suryangalam founded a hermitage called Suru Kubeng, and trained young men from various regions to become selected soldiers. During their martial arts training, the young men were accompanied by the Reog Ponorogo gamelan. The young men trained by Suryangalam later earned the nickname *Warok*. In its development, in the Ponorogo region, *Warok* was then used as a traditional role model, because he was considered qualified in terms of knowledge both physically and mentally (Purwowijoyo, 1985: 12).

The Reog Ponorogo performance mainly contains dance performances of several characters in it. Some of these characters include Singo Barong and Dadak Merak characters, Prabu Klana Sewandana and Bujang Ganong characters, jathilan characters, and *Warok*an dancer characters. Based on this explanation, this research believes that the Reog Ponorogo musical accompaniment is able to represent a symbol of Javanese leadership power. Given the egalitarian nature of the Reog Ponorogo art performance, and being able to adapt to the times. Likewise, the accompaniment, although consisting of simple gamelan instruments, is believed to be able to represent many meanings in it.

METHOD

This research uses interpretive qualitative research methods with a symbolic interpretation analysis approach. In qualitative research, data collection is not guided by theory, but is guided by empirical facts found during research in the field. Data analysis is inductive based on the facts found, and then constructed into hypotheses or theories (Abdussamad, 2021: 81). The symbolic interpretive approach bases its analysis on the interpretation and meaning of cultural symbols, which are expressed through the interaction of taste, emotionality, spirituality, rationality and morality in the communication process. For this reason, in conducting research, researchers combine data from the results of data findings in the field, with theories and literature data related to the object of research. Data collection efforts are carried out interactively through in-depth interview methods, and are carried out continuously until they reach data saturation. As for the determination of sources, researchers used purposive sampling techniques, namely sampling techniques based on certain considerations. For example, such as competence, level of knowledge and experience of the source (Abdussamad, 2021: 137).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Reog Ponorogo Gamelan Accompaniment as a Power of Authority

In terms of accompaniment, the actual composition of Reog Ponorogo gamelan instruments falls into the category of compact gamelan or simple gamelan. This is because the number of gamelan instruments is not as many as the Javanese karawitan gamelan instruments in general. The core instruments of the Reog Ponorogo gamelan only consist of *kethuk, kenong, kendang*, and gong or also known as *kempul*. The complementary instruments are slompret (a small bamboo trumpet), ketipung and angklung. When referring to the information in Sêrat sujarah utawi riwayating gamêlan (Wedhapradăngga) written by Radèn Ngabèi Prajapangrawit Warsadiningrat from the Surakarta Palace, the Reog Ponorogo gamelan instruments are very similar to the Lokananta gamelan category. There are only five instruments, namely *kemanak (gendhing), kethuk (pamatut), kenong (sauran),* large drum (*têtêg*), and gong (*maguru*). However, the Reog Ponorogo gamelan instrument does not have a kemanak. Gamelan Lokananta itself is said to be the work of Bethara Guru when he lived at the top of Mount Lawu (Warsadiningrat, 1943:3 volume1).

Furthermore, the character of the Reog Ponorogo gamelan is slightly different from that of Javanese gamelan music. For example, in Javanese gamelan, there are two types of tunes: slendro and pelog, which cannot be sounded at the same time. However, in the Reog Ponorogo gamelan, the two tones are deliberately brought together and sounded together. The slendro barrel is used to sound the kethuk, kenong, and gong. The pelog tuning is used to sound the slompret and angklung. In addition, the gong beating pattern in the Reog Ponorogo accompaniment is also unlike the usual gong beating pattern in Javanese music. Although the instrument is a gong, the way it is played is more like a kempul. In the Javanese gamelan music pattern, the gong is sounded subtly and only occasionally. In contrast to

the Reog Ponorogo gamelan accompaniment, the Reog gong resembles a kempul (small gong) in Javanese gamelan music, which is sounded continuously and sometimes loudly between pauses in the sound of alternating kenong and kethuk. In terms of shape and size, the gong in Reog gamelan is similar to the gong ageng in Javanese gamelan music, which has an average diameter of about 90 cm. So because it is sounded continuously and with a loud booming sound, usually the material of the Reog gamelan gong does not come from bronze like most gongs in Javanese karawitan, but is made of thick iron plate so that it is durable and does not easily shift its tone.

Given this repetitive pattern, and the character of Reog Ponorogo's gamelan instruments, which produce loud, booming sounds that are masculine, dashing and sacred, there are similarities with the pattern and character of pakurmatan (respectful) gamelan instruments such as Kodhokngorèk, Monggang and Carabalèn combined with the shrill sound of slompret in the Javanese palace. Such gamelan is usually played as a sign of respect for the King, an image of authority and also as a suggestion of encouragement that accompanies soldiers and champions when practising war or fighting for real.

As written in Babad Giyanti volume 01 pupuh dhandhanggula which tells when the King of Surakarta Sunanate Sinuhun Pakubuwana ke-II entered the Surakarta Palace for the first time, it was honoured with the sound of slompret combined with the gamelan Kodhokngorèk, Monggang, and Carabalèn after the King had travelled from Kartasura:

"Têdhakira kangjêng kang siniwi prajurit Kumpêni lan Jawa urmat drèl atri swarane | sinauran mriyêm gung | magênturan anggêgêtêri | slomprèt tambur musikan | suling bêndhe barung | munggang kodhokngorèk ngangkang | carabalèn pradăngga munya ngêrangin | orêg wong sanêgara || Translation: When the King arrives, the Company and Javanese soldiers fire a salute, accompanied by the sound of slompret and the gamelan monggang, followed by the gamelan kodhokngorèk and carabalèn that thrills the whole people (Yasadipura, 1937:11-12 volume 01).

The usage of slompret and the gamelan music of Kodhokngorèk, Monggang and Carabalèn as accompaniment to suggest the encouragement and dignity of soldiers during war training is also mentioned in full in the text excerpt of Babad Giyanti volume 05:

"Kang nindhihi bupati kêkalih | Jayadirja lan Ranadi | sarêng giyak panêmpuhe | baris kilèn gya nambur | barung slomprèt bêndhe tinitir | samya surak sauran | carabalèn umyung | kodhokngorèk munya ngangkang | maryêm kalantaka bêdhil sarêng muni | lir pendah arga gugrag || Free translation: Led by the regents Jayadirja and Ranadi, the troops were alerted for war training. Slompret is sounded to the accompaniment of Kodhokngorèk, and Carabalèn which is greeted by the explosion of cannons and firearms like the sound of an erupting mountain (Yasadipura, 1937:51 volume 05).

According to the records in Babad Ponorogo volume 01 published by the Ponorogo District Culture, Tourism, Youth and Sports Office, such gamelan has been used since the era of Ki Ageng Suryangalam, the ruler of Wengker. Suryangalam used kendhang (Figure 1), gong and kenong reog (Figure 2), slompret (Figure 3), kethuk kempyang, and kempul as musical accompaniment for the

martial arts training of prospective warriors who were later referred to as *Warok* (Purwowijoyo, 1985:12).



Figure 1. Kendang and Ketipung Reog



Figure 2. Gong and Kenong Reog



Figure 3. Slompret Reog

According to Soenarno (78), an old Reog player from Purwantoro, Wonogiri, he stated that the Reog Ponorogo gamelan is intended as an accompaniment to raise the spirit and authority. For this reason, the accompaniment in Reog Ponorogo performances is rancorous, assertive, and upbeat. That's because the accompaniment is used to accompany the Dadak Merak dance where there is the character of the Lion Barong mask, which is said to be a powerful, authoritative person with a tiger's head.

“We accompany Singa Barong's solah, which is definitely a firm and authoritative character. Because according to the story, Singa Barong is a patih who is sakti mandraguna. So, the gamelan accompaniment has to be firm and powerful,” he said.

In addition, he continued that Reog Ponorogo performances are often held in open places, and are filled with many spectators. For this reason, the music of the Reog Ponorogo gamelan must be heard loudly in all directions, so as to attract the attention of the audience to come closer. Similarly, Darmo Sabar (85), a senior Reog Ponorogo artist from Singolangu hamlet, Magetan, East Java, explained that during his decades in the art of Reog Ponorogo, the accompaniment of Reog Ponorogo has a firm and

authoritative character. However, for certain sessions, the accompaniment can be calm according to the needs of the performance.

He explained that slightly different from the Javanese karawitan gamelan, for the Reog Ponorogo gamelan, all gamelan instruments have an equally important position.

'Everything is important here, from the drums, gongs, *slompret*, *kenong*, to *angklung*. They all play an equally strong role in building the atmosphere of the Reog Ponorogo show, which is sacred and authoritative,' he explained.

Reog Ponorogo Gamelan Accompaniment as the Power of Wisdom

The repertoire of the Reog Ponorogo gamelan accompaniment includes the Patrajayan accompaniment, Panaragan accompaniment, Kebo Giro, Srepegan or Seregan, and Sampak. According to Supriyono (48), also known as Mbah Pri, a *Warok* figure from Golan village in Ponorogo, East Java, the accompaniment is not just an ordinary music that has no meaning. According to him, the correct order is lelagon dolanan, then Kebo Giro, then seregan, sampak, Patrajayan accompaniment, and finally Panaragan accompaniment. All of this means the phases of human life, from childhood, adolescence, adulthood, to finding one's identity.

Lelagon dolanan, for example, can contain any lelagon that young children usually play. Such as gundul-gundul pacul, menthog-menthog, or any other children's song. It symbolises a child's childhood full of joy and sincerity. The music then switches to Kebo Giro, which means a powerful buffalo. This symbolises the transition from childhood to adolescence, when adolescence is filled with optimism, passion, and enthusiasm in living life.

"Kebo Giro is usually used to accompany the Ganongan dance, or Pujangga Anom. The nature of the dance is lively and enthusiastic. But sometimes it is also humorous and annoying. Like the depiction of the character of a teenager who is just starting to be enthusiastic about life," he explained. When life has shifted from the teenage phase to the adult phase, the repertoire of gending shifts to seregan, then sampak. That's where the joys and sorrows of life begin. When you are an adult, mature thinking and concepts are needed in living life. The process of finding your identity begins. So the use of seregan and sampak gending is usually used to accompany the Singo Barong or Dadak Merak dance. Where when the seregan accompaniment has a lively and agile character, Pembarong displays the beauty of the dadak peacock dance. Different from the sampak accompaniment which has a firm, contemplative, and wingit character. The sampak accompaniment is used to accompany the Pembarong solah which shows the firmness and authority of the tiger in the Singo Barong mask.

"This is where in the past, in the accompaniment of the sampak gending, there was actually a war between Prabu Klana Sewandana and Singo Barong. This is a symbol of a person's struggle to subdue his own lust. After successfully controlling his lust, he deserves to be called a leader because he has succeeded in leading himself," he explained. After the phase of fighting his own lust is complete, the next phase is the accompaniment of the Patrajayan iring-iring gending which means the golden age.

That is the symbol of the golden age of life, it can also be interpreted as a period of peace and prosperity in life. This phase is called the Panaragan gending iring-iring phase, which means the phase of having met one's true self. “In this Panaragan phase, Singo Barong, Klana Sewandana, and Bujang Ganong have lined up. The three figures actually symbolize the elements of creation, feeling, and will that have united. Here there is no more hostility, because there is no need to win, nor is there any fear of losing. Yes, because they are wise, and able to meet their true selves or in a condition called Panaraga. So what closes is the Panaragan gamelan procession,” he said.

From this explanation, when you have successfully entered the Patrajayan accompaniment and Panaragan accompaniment phases, it is hoped that a good leader will be able to bring glory and peace because he has succeeded in finding the identity of his leadership.

Reog Ponorogo Gamelan Accompaniment as Spiritual Power

Several sources in this study, such as Soenarno, Darmo Sabar, and Supriyono all confirmed and believed in the existence of spiritual power in the Reog Ponorogo performance. However, the spiritual power in question is not spiritual power that comes from the power of spirits, or genies as mythologized. Rather, spiritual power comes from the emotional processing of the reog artists, such as fasting, and others according to their respective beliefs, the purpose of which is none other than to ask for permission and strength from God. This includes the pengrawit or Reog gamelan players. Some of them also undergo ascetic practices to gain spiritual power, so that when playing the reog gamelan, the sound produced can produce a wingit, sacred and authoritative character.

“All of that is like a door with a lock and a key. So that the door can be opened, this lock must first be opened with the right key. "Well, this spiritual practice is like a key, so it can be used to open the locked door," explained Soenarno.

Likewise, with Supriyono, or Mbah Pri. In his capacity as a figure recognized as a *warok* in the Ponorogo region, Mbah Pri also confirmed the existence of spiritual practices that must actually be carried out by Reog artists. Considering the function of the Reog Ponorogo art performance, it is actually not just a function of entertainment. However, there is also a function as a traditional ceremony presentation, where the purpose is also related to spiritualism itself. For example, the Reog Ponorogo performance to ward off disease outbreaks, or agricultural pests and the Reog Ponorogo performance as a form of gratitude for the gift from God.

"Spiritual is related to the psyche. It can also be interpreted as self-control over emotional elements and lust in the mind. So the goal of spiritual practice, yes, when playing the Reog Ponorogo art, all are in a calm and peaceful condition psychologically, so that they are able to present the Reog Ponorogo art performance to the maximum," he explained.

Based on this explanation, a leader who already has spiritual power, or *kawaskithan*, is expected to be able to eliminate and anticipate dangers that will arise, both visible and invisible. For this reason, the Reog Ponorogo gamelan equipment is also usually given offerings, such as telon flowers, incense,

and coffee, and prayed for like other Reog Ponorogo equipment. According to Darmo Sabar, or Mbah Sabar, the purpose of giving the offerings is as a means to purify the equipment from dirt, or disturbances from naughty spirits so that they do not interfere with the performance. This means that the offerings here are spiritual symbols related to purification, not symbols to invite the presence of spirits.

"*Sesajen* is a symbol of a means of asking God. So it has nothing to do with inviting spirits. The goal is to purify the Reog Ponorogo equipment, including the gamelan so that it can run smoothly and safely before, during, and after it is played," he explained. From there, Mbah Sabar argued that the gamelan players should understand how to maintain the sanctity and holiness of the Reog Ponorogo gamelan, so that it can function properly. This includes undergoing ascetic practices, and adhering to ethics or etiquette in treating, caring for, and playing the Reog Ponorogo gamelan instruments.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion above, at least there are at least three elements of Javanese leadership power that can be represented in the accompaniment of the Reog Ponorogo gamelan, along with its instruments. The three elements of power include the power of authority or firmness, the power of wisdom, and spiritual power. Or in the Javanese concept it is often referred to as *wibawa, wicaksana, and waskitha.* The first element of power is authority. A good leader must have the power of authority, so that he is respected by his partners and those he leads. Being respected is different from being feared, because being afraid refers more to moral exemplars and behavior. This means that the authority of a leader will emerge if his behavior, mindset, and character can be emulated and used as a role model. Authority is also the result of emotional control, and one's own lusts, so that it is free and free from arrogance, greed and egoism. Authority is also related to the firmness and justice of a leader when making decisions. This is represented through the function of the accompaniment of the Reog Ponorogo percussion, to accompany the Singo Barong and Prabu Klana Sewandana dances which have a firm character. The power of firmness is also reflected in the dynamic, lively, and firm percussion patterns. The second element of power is wisdom or *kawicaksanan*. A good leader is one who has deep wisdom. Wisdom arises from the intelligence, compassion, and knowledge possessed by a leader himself. A leader who has good intellectual intelligence will be able to sort and choose what is good and bad, so that it is expected to be able to make smart and wise decisions, so as not to cause harm to anyone. Wisdom also arises from consistency, and the consequences of his creativity, feeling, and will, which have become one and no longer conflict with each other. This is represented through the naming of the gending repertoire, and the order of presentation of the accompanying gending in the Reog Ponorogo performance. Starting from the *lelagon gending, kebo giro, seregan,* to *sampak*. Including how to play the gamelan, which, although it has a different form and way of playing, has one goal and can create harmony.

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