

Hermeneutical Analysis of Folk Performance Arts in The Special Region of Yogyakarta as a Texts

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses folk performing arts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) as a cultural text with a focus on the formation of performance, social values, and economic impacts. Arts such as Wayang Topeng, Tayub, Jathilan, and Srandul were chosen because of their role in strengthening cultural identity and the sustainability of social values in society. The study aims to understand performing arts as an aesthetic medium and socio-economic function. Qualitative methods based on ethnography and hermeneutics were used, with direct observation in five regions of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. In-depth interviews were conducted with artists and communities supporting the arts. Data were also obtained from related documents. Hermeneutic analysis highlights performing arts as a representation of aesthetic values and social functions related to the local context. The results of the study show that folk art has a role in social rituals, such as Wayang Topeng to ward off disaster, and Tayub in the Bersih Desa tradition. In addition, this art supports the local economy, creates jobs, and increases tourism. In conclusion, DIY folk performing arts not only function as entertainment, but also as a social and economic driver for the community, so it is important to preserve them.

KEYWORDS

Art
Seblang Olehsari
Cultural
Commodification

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INTRODUCTION

Folk performing arts in DIY have various types and forms of presentation. This situation provides an illustration of how rich the cultural works of the Indonesian nation are. Folk performing arts in general in Indonesia cannot be separated from the cycle of socio-economic life of the community where the folk arts are located. The distribution of performing arts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta in particular, which consists of four districts and one city, provides a clear picture of cultural plurality in terms of art (performance). Related to this, we need to examine several aspects outside of technical issues that need to be studied, namely the relationship between performance texts and the social, cultural, geographical environment or other things related to the place where the arts community is located. In-depth study of other texts, both those related to the group being studied and similar texts in the same field of art, to deepen and add references to the study.

Art is an act of human reflection, in art and through art humans strengthen, question, or offer various possibilities of their human positions. Therefore, the world of art is the world of human reflection, a never-ending dialectic that will only end when humans disappear from the earth (Simatupang, 2013: 3). Art is the result of human cultivation in order to realize beauty. Art according to Herbert Read as quoted by Sony Kartika in his book *Art Criticism*

is expressed as follows: "Art is a human effort to create pleasant forms. A pleasant form in the sense of a form that can frame a feeling of beauty and that feeling of beauty can be satisfied if it can capture the harmony or unity of the form presented " (Dharsono, 2007: 7).

Folk art can be seen as folklore, folk means people, lore means oral tradition that is continuously passed down in the community of its people. Folklore is something that is learned informally, a kind of knowledge about the world, self, community, beliefs, culture, and traditions that are expressed through various media including speech, music, actions, behavior, and objects, folklore as a dynamic process to create, communicate, and demonstrate knowledge. Folklore is grouped into: (1) oral folklore, including language, traditional expressions, riddles, folk poetry, folk tales; (2) partially oral folklore, including folk games, folk theater, folk dance, customs, rituals, folk songs, folk festivals; (3) non-oral folklore including sign language, folk music, architecture, pottery, clothing, textiles, and so on (Simatupang, 2013: 19). In this research, what is specifically studied is folklore related to folk performing arts, so that the analysis of the aspects studied can be focused and at the same time can use theories in studying oral traditions that are passed down from one generation to the next from generation to generation.

Performing arts in general are a text , where as a text Folk Dance is a moving symbol that can be read by the audience. The text here is a form of representation of past life that is projected through acting, dialogue, movement, and other narratives. As a text Folk Dance can be an object of communication between the performer and the audience, and between the form of performance and the audience's imagination. In the book *Semiotics and Social and Cultural Dynamics* by Benny H. Hoed, Paul Ricoeur's (1982) ideas are written as follows:

“The text must be understood by understanding its relationship with the author (text producer), its environment (physical, socio-cultural), and with other texts (intertextuality). So the text must also be understood in the context of the dialogue between the reader and the text that is being read. Thus, what stands out in hermeneutics is the understanding that the text is basically polysemic, so it is impossible to have only one meaning. So its meaning depends on the various factors mentioned above” (Hoed, 2011:94).

Performing arts in this case we consider as text, then we must pay attention to the context of the producer of performing arts. The context that we must pay attention to next is the author, the author in this case is the artist who makes the artwork. The environment in this case is the supporting community that lives and supports the material object of the art, the local ethnic community and the geographical environment where the community lives. Other texts in this case are existing theories related to the social phenomena of the cultural art object being studied, as well as reading sources about the cultural art object. The readers in this case are the researchers themselves and the community of artists who experience the art object, as well as the artists who live in the local area. (Pradoko, 2019: 53). In this research, namely the people's performing arts community in the Special Region of Yogyakarta Province.

This stage, the researcher directly participates in the locus of performing arts both during practice and performance. That is where the dialogue between the audience and the supporting community occurs: in this case, the researcher conducts interviews according to the research objectives regarding the responses of the supporting community of arts culture at the local locus. The two main steps of the ethnographic method and the hermeneutic analysis method of performance as a text will answer the formulation of the problem and the objectives of the research entitled: "Hermeneutic Analysis of Folk Performing Arts in DIYT

as a Text. Given the many types and forms of folk arts in DIY, it will be limited to the types of rare (non-popular) arts that exist in the DIY region, especially in the Regency area proportionally. The formulation of the problem in this mini-research is: (1). How is the formation of the appearance of folk performing arts in DIY? (2). How is the relationship between folk performing arts and the social life of its people?(3).Does folk performing arts have an impact on economic problems in its region?

METHOD

The type of research method used in this study is qualitative research. The method in studying the diversity of folk performing arts in DI Yogyakarta is by conducting ethnography. Ethnography is a qualitative research tradition that has long been used by anthropology scientists. The ethnographic research method developed after Bronislaw Malinowski researched Kula in the Trobriand community. The research was published in a book entitled *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, 1922. Ethnography comes from the words ethnic and graphic, ethnic means tribe, ethnic group while graphic means means that related to writing. Ethnography means writing about a particular ethnic group (Pradoko, 2019: 17).

performance - centered approach, sees the performance as a phenomenon or as a manifestation that appears. The manifestation that appears needs to see not only the text but also its context. The textual approach towards the contextual approach, music, dance, theater as culture in general tends to no longer be treated as a noun but a verb. The interest and focus of the study shift from finding the formal structure of art that is assumed to be relatively constant to the doing of art, the process of how art finds its form, approaches and greets human consciousness. Thus the roles played by the material objects of art are seen as unexplainable if not accompanied by attention to the context that surrounds the presence of the material art (Simatupang, 2013: 81).

After conducting field work, conducting research work at the performance setting location, then conducting a thick and in-depth study by analyzing the performing arts as text. The performance as text will be analyzed using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics. The greatest role of hermeneutics is in the field of historical science and textual criticism, especially of scriptures. As stated by Roger Trig (via Hidayat, 1996: 161), "The Paradigm for hermeneutics is the interpretation of traditional text, where the problem must always be how we can come to understand in our own context something which was written in a radically different situation." The same thing was expressed by Mircea Eliade (via Hadi WM, 2014: 23), "Hermeneutics as the art of interpretation, in which there are three important components that cannot be separated, namely text, interpreter, and reader.

Hermeneutics is the science of interpreting in order to understand something that is abstract and dark to become brighter and able to explain the problem that was originally abstract. F. Budi Hardiman wrote the definition of hermeneutics as follows:

"The word hermeneutics or hermeneutics is the Indonesianization of the English word hermeneutic. The latter word comes from the Greek verb *hermeneuo* which means to express one's thoughts in words. The verb also means to translate and also act as an interpreter. These three meanings actually want to express that hermeneutics is an effort to move from something relatively dark to something brighter. In the first sense, hermeneutic can be understood as a kind of transition from something abstract and dark, namely thoughts, into a clear form of expression, namely the form of language" (Hardiman, 2003: 37).

The word understand in the hermeneutic context is a verb whose description is very broad so that it is able to analyze all aspects of the problem and explain all aspects that are the objectives of the research. (Pradoko, 2019: 40). Paul Ricoeur's poly semi chart as a

reference for consideration to deepen the meaning until obtaining answers to the formulation of research problems by considering various aspects that need to be studied in this study. Various aspects of study considerations are contained in the following figure 1:

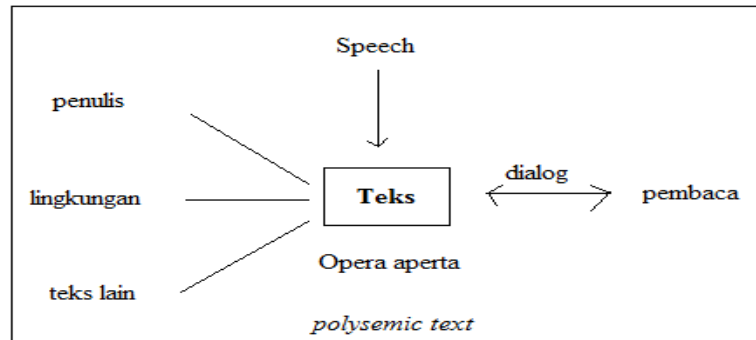


Figure 1. Paul Ricoeur's poly semi chart

The study of popular performing arts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta as a text then made an application chart as follows:

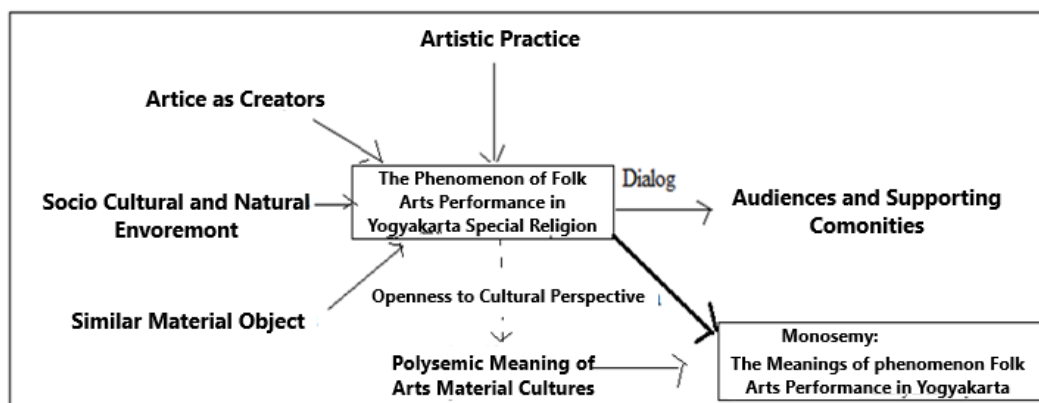


Figure 2. The Flow of Analyses Folk Arts Performance as Texts

The research process carries out the following steps: (1) Field Ethnography, Researchers conducted ethnography in the setting of the locus of the performing arts community of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The informants were from artists, trainers and experts in the location setting. Data sources were obtained through the creation of observation grids, the creation of field questions according to the grids and the objectives of the study, then applying the notebook to informants and key informants and the supporting performing arts community. (2) Hermeneutic Analysis, Hermeneutic Analysis of Performance as Text by taking the following steps: a. Study of the performance environment, social, geography of the community in the art performance group. In-depth interviews with the artists who created the artwork, as well as relatives of the artists who created the artwork. At the in-depth interview stage, the folk art owned by the local community will explore the interview grid as follows: (1). History of folk art in its community. (2). Characteristics of folk art in its community. (3). Narrative text of the story of art in its community (4). Function of folk art in its community. (5). Influence of Economic Impact on its community. (6). Influence on the progress of tourism in its region and the Province of DIY

In-depth study of other texts, both those related to the group being studied and similar texts in the same field of art to deepen and add. At this stage, the researcher conducted an

in-depth study of the following manuscripts and documents: (1). Manuscript documents owned by the community's folk arts, (2). Media sources that write related to the folk arts. (3). Reference sources of books related to the folk arts . (4). Scientific reference sources of journals related to the folk arts.

Art Practice: At this stage, the research team participates by coming directly to the locus of performing arts both during practice and performances. At this stage, the researcher conducted fieldwork by: (1). Being present at the locus of folk arts, collecting data on practice and performance activities. (2). Making field notes on: the art equipment used, music, dance, properties, and musical arrangements. (3). Documenting data on the texts of aesthetic communication messages conveyed in the folk arts.

Dialogue between the Audience and the Supporting Community: in this case the researcher conducting interviews according to research objectives, how do you respond? the community supporting arts culture at the local locus. Folk art performances as texts therefore have a set of messages that are directed to the community of supporters. These communication messages through performances are the input data for analyzing the messages of performing arts. Our research location is mapped into 5 (five regions), namely Bantul, Sleman, Kulon Progo and Gunung Kidul Regencies. In each region, we will take two types of arts that represent the traditional art genres owned by the regencies throughout DIY.

Data collection techniques used in this type of research include observation, document review, and interviews. The research process and data collection were carried out by the research team, who served as the key instrument. As key instruments, researchers gathered data through systematic data collection techniques (Creswell, 2019:248). Data analysis in this study benefited from documents provided by the DIY Cultural Service and the Arts Group, as well as direct observations conducted during the research. To facilitate the data collection process, the research utilized various tools such as recorders (video and tape recorders), observation sheets, and interview guides.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Formation of Performing Arts Performances of the Special Region of Yogyakarta

1. Folk Performing Arts of Sleman Regency

Sleman Regency, located in the northern part of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, is one of the areas rich in folk performing arts treasures. In this area, various forms of traditional art are still alive, developing, and transforming along with the changing times. The existence of folk performing arts is not only a cultural artifact, but also plays a role as a vehicle for the formation of collective identity, spiritual expression, and a strong social communication tool. In this section, six forms of folk performing arts in Sleman will be presented: Wayang Topeng Ngajeg, Tari Tayub, Ketoprak Lesung, Ndolalak, Srandul, and Jathilan Lancur. Each of these art forms will be reviewed narratively in the context of history, social function, and form of performance.

a. Wayang Topeng Ngajeg: Rituality, Inheritance, and the Symbolic Power of Panji

Wayang Topeng in Ngajeg, Kalasan, is one form of folk performing arts that is strongly embedded in traditional rituals and family heritage. Since the early 2000s, the Gondowasitan community was founded by Ki Cermahandoko (Ki Sugeng Widodo), a fourth-generation puppeteer from a puppet family. This community has become a center for preserving Masked Wayang with an informal and participatory educational approach. In the Ngajeg community, Masked Wayang performances are held mainly in the context of village cleansing rituals, believed to be a means of warding off disaster and asking for prosperity.

The scripts performed are generally based on the Panji story, which, although it has many versions, has a main theme about the love between Raden Panji Asmarabangun from Jenggala and Dewi Sekartaji from Kadiri. Through this story, noble values such as loyalty, steadfastness, and greatness of character are instilled. Masked Wayang as a form of performance presents complex symbolic layers: from the shape of the mask that depicts the character of the figure, to the narrative structure that contains cosmological and ethical values.

b. Tayub Dance: Social Dance between Tradition, Controversy, and Adaptation

Tayub is a traditional social dance that has developed in various regions in Java, including Sleman. In Dusun Tengahan, Minggir District, Tayub Dance lives as part of the village cleaning ceremony. Its main function is as an expression of gratitude for the harvest and a request for safety. Female dancers (ledhek) dance with men from the community, accompanied by gamelan music with pelog and slendro scales. Sampur (shawl) is a symbol of social interaction in this dance.

Tayub is not free from controversy. Some people think it is a form of entertainment that is identical to alcohol consumption and physical closeness. However, for the community that supports it, Tayub is an expression of togetherness, social openness, and respect for tradition. The change in the composition of the dancers from the original one woman and four men to two women and more men shows a process of adaptation to social dynamics. Tayub space becomes a negotiation between conservative values and the need for cultural actualization.

c. Ketoprak Lesung: Folk Theater from Lesung to Digital Screen

Ketoprak Lesung is a form of traditional theater that is unique because it uses a lesung (rice pounding tool) as the main musical instrument. In Glondong, Kalasan, this art continues to live and innovate. Since the early 20th century, this form of performance has been known, even attracting the attention of Surakarta aristocrats such as RM Wreksadiningrat who encouraged the addition of musical instruments such as angklung and modern musical instruments.

Ketoprak Lesung combines elements of drama, dance, music, and humor in one communicative and popular performance. The stories are taken from historical stories, legends, to contemporary stories. With the development of media, Ketoprak Lesung can now be enjoyed on various platforms such as YouTube, making it closer to the younger generation. This media transformation shows that traditional art is not stagnant, but rather adaptive to the progress of the times without losing its traditional roots.

d. Ndolalak: From Purworejo to Sleman, the Spirit of Respect and Communal Energy

Ndolalak is a form of folk dance originating from Purworejo and now lives in the Sleman area, especially Panasan, Triharjo. This dance emerged in the early 20th century, initially performed by adult men in group formations. Over time, female dancers began to take over because they were considered more expressive and dynamic. The name "Ndolalak" is taken from the notes Do and La, which are part of the accompanying musical rhythm.

In Sleman, Ndolalak performances are held in the yard at night. This dance is full of the spirit of respect and togetherness. Typical movements such as nodding the head (ndolalak) illustrate the values of respect and politeness. The accompanying music uses *genjringan* and *jedor*, creating a unique and captivating rhythm. Ndolalak is not just entertainment, but also a symbol of the cultural meeting between Sleman and Purworejo, enriching the mosaic of folk performing arts in DIY.

e. Srandul: Spiritual Stage and Folk Jokes

Srandul is a performing art that combines dance, drama, music, and elements of spirituality. This art is believed to originate from the term "pating srendul" which means mixed, referring to a flexible and adaptive storytelling style. Srandul is usually performed at night, using oncor (torches) as the main element, both functionally and symbolically. Torches are a symbol of spiritual enlightenment as well as a marker of a sacred atmosphere.



Figure 3. Srandul art, typical with Oncor (fire) in the middle of the performance

Srandul is often played at weddings, circumcisions, and has now developed into part of a cultural tourism attraction. The stories presented can be folk tales, historical figures, to contemporary social criticism, such as the plays Demang Cokroyuda and Prawan Sunthi. This performance involves 15 players in traditional costumes, carrying moral messages through Javanese prayers and songs. Elements of comedy are also present, making Srandul an art form that is both educational and entertaining. Its existence reflects the resilience of local culture in voicing universal values.

f. Jathilan Lancur: Transformation from Ritual to Public Aesthetic Space

Jathilan Lancur is a form of jathilan typical of Sleman that uses a horse braid (ebeg) and a surjan costume complete with a keris. This dance has developed since the 1940s and has strong roots in community rituals such as Midhang Pasar Jiwan. The term "Lancur" refers to the special decoration on the dancer's headband. The dance movements used are inspired by the Yogyakarta-style Wayang Orang, with properties such as swords and turbans.

The accompanying music for Jathilan Lancur is monotonous and repetitive, supporting the trance atmosphere (ndadi) which is one of the main attractions. Although initially ritualistic and sacred, since the tourism era of the 1980s, Jathilan Lancur has expanded its function to become a public spectacle. According to RM Soedarsono, the function of traditional dance includes three aspects: as a ritual medium, personal entertainment, and aesthetic presentation. In this context, Jathilan Lancur shows the dynamics of function from spiritual to performative.

In its development in the 2000s, Jathilan Lancur also became an inspiration in the creation of contemporary dance. This indicates that traditional art is not stagnant, but rather becomes the raw material for new creations. Jathilan Lancur is proof that folk performing arts are able to transform without losing their original identity.

Collective Narrative in the Pulse of Sleman Locality

The six forms of folk performing arts that live in Sleman are not stand-alone entities, but rather part of the collective narrative of the community that continues to build identity and social relations. Wayang Topeng, Tayub, Ketoprak Lesung, Ndolalak, Srandul, and Jathilan Lancur each display a spectrum of values, ranging from spirituality, aesthetics, sociality, to criticism and entertainment. They are a reflection of the resilience of culture that is able to respond to the times with creativity and steadfast roots.

By understanding the formation of form, function, and value of folk performing arts in Sleman, we not only witness cultural performance, but also dive into the social dynamics that bring it to life. Folk art becomes a living text that continues to be reread by generation after generation, as a form of respect for ancestors as well as a bridge to the future of local culture.

2. Folk Performing Arts of Gunungkidul Regency: Narrative, Heritage, and Craftsman Community

Gunungkidul Regency, located in the southeastern region of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, has a cultural landscape that is no less rich than other regions. In the midst of the distinctive karst terrain and a society that upholds traditional values, two important forms of folk performing arts have grown: Kethek Ogleng and Topeng Wayang Bobung. These two arts are not only entertaining, but also contain symbolic, spiritual, historical, and communitarian dimensions. With the Panji story as the narrative foundation and the involvement of the local community, performing arts in Gunungkidul are part of a living cultural system that continues to transform.

a. Kethek Ogleng Pathuk: From Panji Drama to Intangible Cultural Heritage

Kethek Ogleng is a folk performing art that has long developed in the Pathuk region, Gunungkidul. Its basic form is a dance drama full of symbols and humor, often performed after the harvest season as a form of gratitude and collective entertainment. The performance is based on the Panji story, especially the part that tells the love triangle between the characters Kethek Ogleng (ape man), Endang Lara Tompe, and Raden Panji Putra. The story presents conflict, seduction, escape, rescue, and resolution—a typical plot of a widely known Javanese epic.

In the narrative, Kethek Ogleng is depicted as the incarnation of Rahwana, who is looking for Dewi Widowati who has been reincarnated as Endang Lara Tompe. When they meet, Kethek Ogleng tries to seduce Lara Tompe, but fails. He is then defeated by Raden Panji Putra in a symbolic battle between evil and good. The ending emphasizes the victory of true love and social harmony. The story is not only told, but also visualized through expressive dance movements and striking costumes, including the monkey attribute which is the main attraction.

The main strength of Kethek Ogleng lies not only in its lively storyline, but also in the distinctive aesthetic form of the performance. The costumes of the actors reflect the characters they play in an iconic way. The dance movements are theatrical and full of improvisation, building a direct dialogue with the audience. The accompanying music uses traditional musical instruments that strengthen the dramatic atmosphere. Beyond aesthetics and entertainment, the existence of Kethek Ogleng also has an important legal-cultural dimension. On January 1, 2013, this art was officially recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indonesia by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This recognition shows the importance of preserving local values and at the same time strengthens the position of Kethek

Ogleng as a Gunungkidul cultural identity that is worthy of being considered at the national level.



Figure 4. The Art of Ogleng Kethek

b. Bobung Puppet Mask: Craft Aesthetics and Community Collaboration

On the east side of Gunungkidul, precisely in Bobung Hamlet, Putat Village, a unique and innovative art community has grown: Bobung Puppet Mask. Bobung Hamlet is part of Putat Cultural Village which has long been known as a center for wooden mask crafts. This is where the form of performing arts was born, combining puppetry, dance, and mask crafts into one complete performance unit.

Bobung Puppet Mask is often referred to as "Puppet Mask Dance" because its main strength lies in the role of the mask as a symbol of character. The Panji characters are again present as the main narrative, but this time they are visualized through body expression and masks, not through puppeteers and shadow puppets. This performance is usually performed by a group of dancers representing various characters in the Panji story. Their movements are classically patterned, but are given room for improvisation according to the context of the performance.

Uniquely, the birth of this art is inseparable from the transformation of the function of the mask craftsman community. If in other areas masks are only used as decorative or ritual objects, in Bobung masks become a medium of performative expression. This did not just happen. Collaboration between craftsmen, dance artists, and local communities has formed a cultural ecosystem that allows the Bobung Wayang Mask to develop organically.

The success of the Bobung community in bringing this art to life has also received widespread recognition. National television such as TVRI and international media such as French Television have covered arts and crafts activities in this village, proving that the existence of local art is able to penetrate geographical boundaries and become a global spectacle. This achievement shows that folk art can be part of effective cultural diplomacy.

c. Differences and Synergies between Ngajeg and Bobung in the Mask Tradition

Although they have the same theme, namely the Panji Wayang Mask, the mask tradition in Bobung is contextually different from that which developed in Ngajeg, Kalasan, Sleman. In Ngajeg, this tradition grew from the lineage of puppeteers, was inherited through families, and tended to maintain the structure of classic puppetry performances. The Gondowasitan community, for example, adheres to a performance format that involves complete gamelan elements, puppeteers, and a standard narrative structure.

In contrast, the tradition in Bobung was born from a community of craftsmen, not puppeteers. Although some of its members have studied puppetry, their performance approach is more flexible and focuses on choreography and visuals. Dance elements are dominant, and performances are shorter, more adaptive, and often used in the context of cultural tourism. In other words, if Ngajeg maintains tradition as a "heritage", then Bobung presents tradition as "community creativity". The synergy of the two—Ngajeg and Bobung—shows the spectrum of diversity of the mask tradition in Yogyakarta. On the one hand, we see the importance of inheritance and orthodoxy. On the other hand, we witness innovation and community dynamics. Both complement each other and strengthen the sustainability of folk performing arts as a heritage as well as a contemporary work.

Gunungkidul and Community-Based Aesthetics

The folk performing arts in Gunungkidul Regency show that art is not only a legacy of the past, but also the result of the collective work of today's community. Kethek Ogleng and Topeng Wayang Bobung present narratives that are not only beautiful in form, but also strong in meaning and social relevance. With the existence of an active supporting community and an adaptive transformation process, these two arts are strong markers of local cultural resilience.

Gunungkidul is an example that folk art does not always have to submit to old forms, but can develop, synergize, and adapt to the needs of the times, as long as it is still rooted in the values of a living community. In this context, performing arts are not just a spectacle, but a reflection and way of life of its people.

3. Folk Performing Arts of Bantul Regency: Traditional Spirituality and Religious Heritage

Bantul Regency has a wealth of folk performing arts that combine elements of ritual, spirituality, and religion in a distinctive aesthetic format. The two main art forms that represent these characteristics are Nini Thowong and Shalawat Montro. Both reflect the depth of local culture rooted in beliefs in the invisible world and Islamic values, while also displaying the process of transformation from ritual to stage performance.

a. Nini Thowong: Symbolic Reincarnation on the People's Stage

Nini Thowong is a unique form of ritual art that is full of spiritual meaning. This art developed in the Pundong area, Bantul, and originates from the traditions of an agrarian society that believes that life and death have a connected line. In this context, Nini Thowong becomes a symbolic medium to bring together the spirit world and the real world. The form of Nini Thowong was originally a female doll made from household tools such as *siwur* (a tool for drawing water from coconut shells) and polished in such a way that it resembles an adult woman. Her face is covered in white powder (*medhak-medhok*), her eyes are sparkling (*wild*), and her movements invite laughter (*solahe gawe guyu*). However, behind her humorous appearance, Nini Thowong carries a mystical atmosphere. She was symbolically resurrected from the dead to answer human questions about life: illness, disaster, harvest, and drought. In her performance, Nini Thowong is accompanied by ritual songs such as "*Iilir-Iilir*" and mantras sung along with hand clapping. This dance can be performed by one or seven female dancers who act as manifestations of Nini Thowong. The performance takes place in a sacred atmosphere that is also theatrical, bridging the spiritual dimension and the empirical world. In this process, it is believed that spirits from other realms can communicate with the community.

Unfortunately, this art form is increasingly rare. Only a handful of communities in Yogyakarta, especially in the Bantul area, still preserve it. The religious stigma that considers this performance as a mystical activity or even heresy has made its existence increasingly under pressure. In fact, if read as a cultural and spiritual expression, Nini Thowong actually holds valuable local knowledge as part of intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, the preservation and actualization of Nini Thowong is very necessary—not just as a performance, but as a contemplative and educational space about life.

b. Shalawat Montro: Harmony of Music, Prayer, and Islamic Morality

Another folk performing art that reflects the spirituality of the Bantul community is Shalawat Montro. This art form was born in the Kauman, Pleret, and was developed by Kanjeng Yudhanegara, son-in-law of Sultan Hamengkubuwono VIII. As part of Javanese Islamic culture, Shalawat Montro combines praise to the Prophet Muhammad with the chanting of traditional gending, forming a religious art form that is full of moral and educational values.

The performance of Shalawat Montro involves a complex role structure. There are wiraswara (chanters of shalawat), nayaga (gamelan players), wiraga (dancers), and dalang (show leader) who are also tasked with conveying moral messages. The selection of the dalang is not arbitrary—he must have a good voice and a deep understanding of religious teachings. This shows that this performance does not only focus on entertainment, but also on preaching and character education.

Shalawat Montro usually appears in various cultural and religious events such as Sekaten, Rebo Pungkasan, and family celebrations. Its existence creates a space of transcendence in the midst of society, where art and worship blend in harmony. The lyrics of the shalawat that are sung carry messages of tolerance, unity, and an invitation to goodness.

In the current context, Shalawat Montro has great potential to continue to live and develop, especially among the younger generation. The uniqueness of the blend of Islamic values with traditional performing arts makes it relevant as a medium for conveying noble values culturally. For this reason, creative approaches such as digitalization, cross-generational training, and cultural festivals need to be carried out so that Shalawat Montro remains part of the identity of the religious and cultured Bantul community.

Folk Spirituality in Local Aesthetics

Folk performing arts in Bantul Regency show how spirituality and culture merge in a living form of expression. Nini Thowong and Shalawat Montro each present different narratives—one rooted in animistic rituals and spirit mediation, the other based on Islamic values and collective morality. However, both show that art is not only a form of aesthetics, but also a vehicle for spiritual communication, social education, and the preservation of noble values. In maintaining the existence of both, contextual understanding, an inclusive approach, and support from communities and cultural institutions are needed.

4. Folk Performing Arts of Kulon Progo Regency: Angguk Dance as Social Criticism and Cultural Heritage

Folk performing arts in Kulon Progo Regency display a unique blend of local history, political satire, and elements of spirituality. One of the most prominent art forms in this area is the Angguk Dance. This dance is not just an artistic expression, but also contains sharp social criticism of colonialism and the rich cultural heritage of the fusion of Java and Ponorogo. In the context of its history and social development, the Angguk Dance has become a symbol of identity and resistance of the Kulon Progo community.

a. Origins and Historical Narrative of the Angguk Dance

The Angguk Dance originated from the influence of the Ponorogo Warok who came to the Yogyakarta region after helping the Mataram Kingdom in dealing with the Trunojoyo rebellion. As a form of appreciation, they were given an area that is now part of Kulon Progo. The presence of these Warok brought with them distinctive arts such as Jathilan and Reog which gradually transformed according to the local context.

In its development, the Angguk Dance became a form of criticism of the natives who became soldiers of the Dutch East Indies (KNIL). The teenage male dancers or *gemblak* wear clothes that resemble Dutch army uniforms, but are modified with Jathilan attributes such as *sampur* and gentle movements. The repeated head-bowing movement (nodding) is the main characteristic of this dance, as well as the origin of the name "Angguk Dance."

This dance symbolically states that native soldiers are nothing more than puppets who submit to the orders of the colonizers. They are depicted as weak and helpless women, showing subordination and sharp socio-political irony. Thus, the Angguk Dance becomes a cultural representation that not only reflects history, but also becomes a symbolic tool of resistance against injustice.

b. Costume: Political Representation and Cultural Identity

The costumes of the Angguk Dance dancers are an important part of the symbolism of this dance. The elements of the KNIL army clothing are very obvious, starting from the hat, shirt, to the pants, which reflect western influences. On the other hand, Ponorogo's influence can be seen from ornaments such as decorative embroidery, tassels, and the use of *sampur*. On the back of the costume, there is an element of "*waktung*" (*growak butung*) which is a characteristic of Ponorogo's traditional clothing called *penadon*. The combination of western and traditional costumes creates a striking visual contrast that is full of meaning. This costume makes the Angguk Dance easily recognizable and has a strong character as a satirical performance. This uniqueness is also a form of expression of Kulon Progo's cultural identity which is open to outside influences, but still maintains local values.

c. Mystical Elements and Spirituality of the Angguk Dance

In addition to the historical and political aspects, the Angguk Dance is also believed to have a spiritual dimension. In the community's beliefs, there is an assumption that this performance can invite spirits or spirits to "play" through the dancers' bodies. This phenomenon is often associated with a trance or possession condition similar to the experience in the Jathilan performance.

The presence of this mystical element strengthens the position of the Angguk Dance as part of folk art that is directly in touch with the local belief system. It is not just a spectacle, but also a spiritual medium that connects the real world and the supernatural, making each performance a social rite as well as a transcendent experience.

d. Development and Transformation of the Angguk Dance

Over time, the Angguk Dance has undergone a number of changes in form and meaning. In the 1990s, the role of dancers that were previously dominated by men began to be replaced by young women. This change opened up new interpretations of the meaning of dance, while making it more adaptive to the tastes and sensibilities of contemporary society.

According to Wagio, one of the Angguk elders, this dance is very popular among the lower class because of its strong and humorous entertainment content. This has caused it to spread widely to areas such as Purworejo. Although it has similarities with the Dolalak Dance from Purworejo—especially in terms of movement and use of rhythm—the Angguk Dance still has its own characteristics, namely the use of a *timang* belt around the waist like in the *Jathilan* dance, which is not found in *Dolalak*.

The development of costumes has also changed. Now, the Angguk Dance displays a more modern style: thigh-length shorts, long flowing hair, and more energetic performance dynamics. Although it appears to have changed from its original form, the essence and critical spirit and spirituality are still maintained and passed down from generation to generation.



Figure 5. Angguk Dance, typical of Kulon Progo

The Angguk Dance as a Living Heritage of Kulon Progo

The Angguk Dance is a concrete manifestation of how folk art can record history, voice social criticism, and at the same time maintain the spirituality of the community. In Kulon Progo Regency, this dance is not only a means of entertainment or cultural performance, but also a reflection of collective identity that responds to the dynamics of the times. It was born from history, lives in society, and continues to develop through creativity without leaving the roots of its values. Therefore, preserving the Angguk Dance is not only about protecting cultural heritage, but also maintaining social memory and the spirit of resistance of the people who live in the form of aesthetics.

5. Yogyakarta City Folk Performing Arts: Gejog Lesung as a Post-Harvest Cultural Expression

Gejog Lesung is a typical Yogyakarta folk performing art that grew from the agrarian traditions of rural communities. This art is performed by hitting a *lesung* (a wooden rice pounder) using a pestle or *antan*, creating a rhythmic beat that responds to each other. The beating pattern used resembles the interlocking technique in gamelan music, or known as *imbal-imbalan*, producing a simple yet rich harmony of sounds with local nuances. Initially, Gejog Lesung was played by women as part of a harvest celebration, expressing gratitude and happiness. However, over time, the role of the players has become more inclusive,

involving both women and men. This shift reflects social dynamics and changes in gender roles in society.

More than just entertainment, Gejog Lesung contains noble values such as mutual cooperation, togetherness, and social harmony. It has become a symbol of collective joy and a spirit of working together, as well as a cultural expression that is deeply rooted in people's lives. Its presence in the city of Yogyakarta today is an important marker that the agrarian tradition is not just a memory, but continues to live in the form of dynamic and down-to-earth art.

B. The Relationship between Folk Performing Arts and Social Values of Society

Folk performing arts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) are not just spectacles or entertainment, but also manifestations of social values that live in society. It contains the spirit of togetherness, spirituality, solidarity, and preservation of culture that has been passed down from generation to generation. Through various forms of folk art that have developed in areas such as Sleman, Bantul, and the City of Yogyakarta, we can witness how social values are manifested in real terms through rituals, symbols, and collective interactions.

One form of art that is full of social meaning is the Topeng Pedalangan Wayang from Ngajeg, Sleman. This art is present in the context of a village cleansing ceremony which is believed to be a medium to ward off disaster and invite blessings. The community believes that this performance can protect the village from danger, fertilize the soil, and bring prosperity. In practice, this performance brings together residents in a collective ritual atmosphere that strengthens solidarity and strengthens relationships between residents.

The Tayub dance, also from Sleman, functions as a vehicle for building social relations. Although in some views it contains controversy because it is associated with the values of worldly pleasures, Tayub actually contains the spirit of mutual cooperation and gratitude for the abundant harvest. In the village cleaning ceremony, Tayub becomes a tool to unite the community, a place for interaction between men and women in a friendly atmosphere but still under the control of tradition.

Jathilan Lancur, with the main property of the horse braid, is a performing art that contains symbols of physical and spiritual strength. This dance not only provides entertainment, but also becomes a means of social ritual that binds the community through collective experience. Dance movement techniques such as *tayungan egol* and *tanjak* (*tancep*), which are inspired by Yogyakarta-style *wayang orang*, show the connection between folk art and classical traditions. One of the most awaited scenes in Jathilan is the moment of "*ndadi*" or trance, which is the peak of the spiritual and cultural experience for the audience. The symbol of the horse head in Jathilan is believed to be a channel of spiritual energy, which represents the connection between humans and ancestors.

Srandul, a performing art that developed in the Kotagede area, not only functions as a means of entertainment, but also as a medium for conveying moral values and prayers. Through songs such as the *Kinanthi* song, noble messages about life, ethics, and virtue are conveyed in a touching way. The audience does not just watch the performance, but also reflects on the spiritual message contained therein. Overall, folk performing arts in DIY radiate social values that are rooted in the lives of the community. It is not only a form of cultural expression, but also an instrument of social education, a spiritual space, and a collective mirror that binds citizens in a shared awareness of their identity and the noble values they adhere to.

C. Economic Impact of Folk Performing Arts Activities

In addition to having strong social and spiritual functions, folk performing arts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) also have a significant impact on the economic life of the community. As a region known as a cultural tourism destination both domestically and internationally, DIY makes folk performing arts an integral part of its culture-based economic development strategy. This economic impact is not only felt by artists, but also by supporting communities, creative industry players, and the local community more broadly.

First, folk performing arts such as Wayang Topeng Pedalangan, Jathilan Lancur, and Tayub are a direct source of income for artists. These performances are often invited to various formal and traditional events such as village cleaning, weddings, hajatan, and other cultural celebrations. From here, artists, puppeteers, dancers, gamelan players, and supporting crews earn income through honorariums, tips, and proceeds from the sale of related artworks.

Second, the existence of traditional arts also encourages the growth of the tourism sector and the creative industry. Arts such as Ketoprak Lesung and Wayang Topeng Bobung in Gunungkidul attract the attention of local and foreign tourists. Documentation by national media such as TVRI and international media such as French Television proves the potential for globalization of local folk arts. This has an impact on increasing community income from the sale of performance tickets, handicrafts, cultural products, and local culinary.

Third, folk performing arts empower local craftsmen who produce art properties such as masks, costumes, and musical instruments. In Bobung, Gunungkidul, for example, the mask craftsman community earns income from selling their products to both artists and tourists. This activity strengthens the local culture-based creative economy.

Fourth, community involvement in art activities opens up new job opportunities, both temporary and long-term. Art performances require many roles—from puppeteers, dancers, musicians, stage managers, costume designers, to documentation teams. Thus, folk arts become a productive sector that supports the economic resilience of the community.

Fifth, the implementation of cultural events such as village cleaning, earth alms, and other traditional celebrations accompanied by art performances such as Jathilan and Srandul also drive the local economy. The surrounding community participates in economic activities through the sale of food, drinks, souvenirs, to parking and logistics services. This tradition indirectly creates a sustainable micro-economic ecosystem.

Thus, folk performing arts not only have aesthetic and spiritual value, but also provide real contributions in strengthening the economic foundation of the people in Yogyakarta. Through strengthening the culture-based economy, folk arts prove that tradition can be a force for inclusive and sustainable development.

CONCLUSIONS

Folk performing arts in the Special Region of Yogyakarta from 4 districts and cities, analysis of aspects of appearance, social values and economic impacts obtained are summarized below: Folk performing arts in DIY show diversity of forms and meanings, including Wayang Topeng Pedalangan, Tayub, Srandul, and Jathilan. Each performing art has a unique formation that reflects local traditions, such as the properties used, the rhythm of the music, and the narrative conveyed. For example, Jathilan Lancur with the symbol of the horse braid involves elements of traditional ritual and aesthetics.

Folk art is an important medium in the social life of the DIY community. The spiritual value of Wayang Topeng is used for rituals to ward off disaster, strengthening collective beliefs. Social unifier, Tayub in the Village Cleanup event strengthens relations between

residents. Preservation of Tradition : Arts such as Srandul bring moral values through traditional songs, uniting the younger generation with local traditions. Performing arts contribute significantly to the local economy. Local income is obtained through invitations to perform at various events, increasing the income of artists and the community. The development of Ketoprak Lesung and Wayang Topeng tourism attracts domestic and international tourists. Empowerment of the creative industry through art production, through masks, creates economic opportunities for local artisans. This conclusion shows that folk performing arts not only functions as entertainment, but also as a tool to strengthen the culture, social and economic of the community in the Special Region of Yogyakarta.

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