

Revitalizing Reyog Kendang Tulungagung in the Globalization Age

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Abstract—Reyog Kendang Tulungagung is a local performing art that becomes the icon of Tulungagung regency. Despite its status as the icon of Tulungagung, the government and society continue the effort to preserve the existence of this art. There are various attempts done to preserve Reyog Kendang Tulungagung in this globalization era that influence local arts such as registering the art to HAKI and breaking MURI record. Using descriptive qualitative method and literature study, the researcher found several other new attempts namely batik pattern, aerobic, miniature, and illustration (mascot) all of which included the elements of Reyog Kendang Tulungagung. These attempts were deeply appreciated by the public and government. Despite the alterations from dance into various forms, it did not leave out the distinctive feature of the art so Reyog Kendang Tulungagung can continue to exist inside or outside the native region.

Keywords—reyog, reyog kendang, Tulungagung preservation, globalization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country blessed with rich culture. Each region has different culture and many have more than one. These cultures and traditional arts within were used as a kind of icon by some regions, for example *Mega Mendung* batik pattern from Cirebon and *Gandrung* dance from Banyuwangi. Similarly, Tulungagung, a region in East Java, promotes *Reyog Kendang* as its icon. *Reyog*, a kind of performing art, is probably better known as Ponorogo's iconic art even though this art has different forms in different regions in which one of them is Reyog Kendang [1, 2, 3].

As *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* has not been as popular as *Reyog Ponorogo*, the government and the people of Tulungagung strive to introduce and promote the art so that it is increasingly recognized. These efforts, at the same time, also preserve *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* so that native people would remain loving this art despite the advances of globalization. Therefore, the government and people of Tulungagung do not only strive to preserve *Reyog Kendang* but also to promote and improve the existence of this art. This paper presents revitalizing *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* in the globalization age.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II presents literature review. Section III describes material and proposed method. Section IV presents the development of reyog kendang Tulungagung in facing globalization era. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *The History and Art Tradition of Tulungagung Regency*

According to the History and Chronicle of Tulungagung (2007), Tulungagung is a regency in East Java of which most of its area are lowland at an altitude of 85 meters above sea level while the highest point is Mount Wilis, 2,552 meters above sea level in the northwest of the city. On the south side stretches the limestone mountain rich in natural resource which is marble. Thus, it is not surprising that Tulungagung is the largest marble producer in Indonesia. Administratively, Tulungagung borders Blitar in the east, Trenggalek in the west, Kediri on the north side and the southern part is the Indian Ocean.

Tulungagung regency consists of 19 sub-districts namely Bandung, Besuki, Boyolangu, Campurdarat, Gondang, Kalidawir, Karangrejo, Kauman, Kedungwaru, Ngantru, Ngunut, Pagerwojo, Pakel, Pucanglaban, Rejotangan, Sendang, Sumbergempol, Tanggunggunung, and Tulungagung. Before it was named Tulungagung, this regency located in the south side of Brantas river was known as Ngrawa or Banarawa which means a jungle that turned into swamp or lake. At that time, most of Ngrawa's areas were swamp. It was also a part of Mataram kingdom territory and ruled by a Tumenggung. The swamps were once a jungle flooded continuously by Brantas river and thus turned into swamp. Besides that, there were many sources of water there. Thus, the word Tulungagung came from *Tulung* which means water sources in Sanskrit or help in Javanese and *Agung* which means mighty. In other words, Tulungagung means a big source of water or big help. This name began to be used since 1 April 1901 when Tulungagung became a regency [4]. According to Siwi, this event used to be Tulungagung's anniversary. However, in 2003, it was amended into 18 November based on the date found in Lawadan inscription which was stored in Wajakensis Boyolangu Tulungagung museum.

As has been mentioned before, many regions in Indonesia is rich with different art tradition. In this case, Tulungagung is no exception. There are many art traditions in Tulungagung from dance, music, theatre, fine art and craft, and even ritual art. Regarding traditional dance, there are *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*, *Lalangen Beksa* or *Tayub*, and *Jaranan Senterewe* where from music there is *Kentrung*. In theatre, there are *Wayang Jemblung* and *Ludruk*. Meanwhile, from fine art and craft, there are batik, marble, embroidery, and relief found in ancient statue such as Homo Wajakensis,

Gayatri Temple, Penampihan Temple, Mirigambar Temple, and Pesanggrahan Temple. Lastly, traditional ceremonies include *Jamasan Tombak Kyai Upas*, *Manten Kucing*, *Labuh Sembonyo*, and *Ritual Tiban*.

These arts and traditions continue to exist as people strive to preserve and pass them down to the next generation. In addition, the local government also supports the preservation of arts and traditions although some arts are more favored than others in order to make them the distinctive icon of Tulungagung.

B. *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung Performing Art*

The word *reyog* is well-known to people of Tulungagung, Ponorogo, and the regions around. Most Indonesian assumed that *reyog* is a performing art from Ponorogo regency. In fact, several other regions also have their own *reyog* in which one of them is Tulungagung. In Tulungagung, it is called as *Reyog Kendang* (see Figure 1). Lisbijanto [5] stated that *Reyog Ponorogo* consists of *dhadak merak*, *jathil* dancer, *gamelan* player, and *senggakan* group. Soedarsono [6], also said that *jathilan*, *kuda kepang*, and *reyog* are common names/terms in this performing art. On the other hand, *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*, according to Siwi [7], consists of six elements namely *gong kempul* tied to *gayor*, *slomporet*, *kenong*, *iker* or tie, six *dhodhog* or *kendang*, and *gongseng* (golden chime *binggel*). Based on these explanations, it can be concluded that *Reyog Ponorogo* and *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* have different display and characteristics.



Fig. 1. A Reyog Kendang Tulungagung Dancer

Doc. Utari, 2016

Reyog in traditional art means dance or rocking because it was revived and preserved by people and later it was developed into folk dances. Therefore, the most appropriate meaning of *Reyog* is folk dance. The word *reyog* came from *reyok* which can be found in *kakawin Negarakertagama* passage 9 verse 1. The word *reyok* itself came from *panggreyok* which means one of the groups facing the king. From the movement in the form of procession and *kendang* playing, it can be concluded that *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* is a warrior dance that is performed to welcome or escort the king's convoy [7]. Hartono [8] also mentioned that *reyog* came from the word *rog* while *rog* has the same meaning with *reg* and *yog*. *Rog* can mean *erog*, *herog*, *rog-*

rog asem. *Reg* means *horeg-reg-regan*, and *yok* means *hoyok*, *oyok*. These have the same meaning, dancing or rocking. Then, Lisbijanto [5] added that *reyog* is a dance performed by several people. Therefore, it can be concluded that *reyog* is a folk art in the form of dance performed by several people and accompanied by Javanese gamelan.

C. *The History of Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*

According to Siwi [7], there were two version of legend regarding the beginning of *Reyog Kendang*. The first version is the wedding of Dewi Kilisuci and Jatasura and the second is the story of Dewi Kilisuci's rejection toward the marriage proposal of a Bugis king. Both stories brought about the origin of the element and choreography of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*. In the development of this art, people favored the second version rather than the first which is the story of Dewi Kilisuci's rejection toward the marriage proposal of a Bugis king. In short (a paper in the conference of *Reog Kendang Tulungagung* 12 November 2014 page 1-4), the story began by the proposing of a Bugis king to Dewi Kilisuci, the crown princess of Kediri kingdom. However, Dewi Kilisuci has taken an oath to not marry anyone so she gave six difficult tasks for the king as a condition. On the way to Kediri, the king once stopped in the area of Sendang, Tulungagung, and he came back there again to ask for help. Unknown to Dewi Kilisuci, the Bugis king was able to fulfill her requirements with the help of people from Sendang. As Dewi Kilisuci could not reject the proposal for the second time, she decided to run away and hide in the Selomangkling cave in Kediri. There, she became a nun since she could not break her oath to live unmarried. The king and his envoy tried to find Dewi Kilisuci but to no avail.

These chain of events that occurred from the band of Bugis warriors and the representatives of the Sendang people who delivered the Dewi Kilisuci's six demands, until the Bugis king and his entourage left Kediri because they failed to find Dewi Kilisuci who hide in Selomangkling cave inspired the formation of 12 (twelve) compulsory movements from *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*. Meanwhile, Dewi Kilisuci's six demands became the musical instrument and six compulsory elements of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*. The involvement of Sendang people was believed to be the reason of how *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* was formed which was to reminisce those events.

D. *The Intellectual Property Right of Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*

Intellectual Property Right refers to the government's legal recognition of a work, brand, patent, trade, industry or anything which is approved in accordance with the law. In terms of arts, the IPR acts to protect the art legally so that it is not claimed by another person or other region. Some regions in Indonesia have registered their distinctive indigenous arts to Dirjen HAKI. In terms of IPR, *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* has been registered to Dirjen HAKI since 2009 with C00200903657 as its number and Tulungagung regent as the holder of the right. Consequently, it has been recognized legally that *Reyog Kendang* is the original art of Tulungagung regency [9].

III. PROPOSED METHOD

This study is a qualitative research using descriptive data analysis. The approach taken is to conduct literature studies in order to find relevant information. In addition, the researcher also observed various *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* performances, conducted interviews with Mr. Siwi as Tulungagung's district historian, and documentation.

IV. THE DEVELOPMENT OF REYOG KENDANG TULUNGAGUNG IN FACING GLOBALIZATION ERA

Despite having acquired the Intellectual Property Right, the government and people of Tulungagung keep striving to preserve *Reyog Kendang*. The rapid advance of globalization demands the natives to protect their local arts and cultures so that it stands and exist amidst the exposure of foreign cultures brought by globalization. Therefore, it is important to continue preserving local arts and cultures and pass them to the next generation. The exposure of foreign cultures somehow threatens the existence of local cultures. Hence, a different kind of approach need to be taken in preserving them so that it can attract and reach all levels and circles of society such as the effort done by the people and the government of Tulungagung in preserving *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*.

A. *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung Performing Art*

There is no specific rule regarding the time of the performance held or the performer. As a result, *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* is performed frequently in a variety of occasion such as the traditional ceremonies of *Jamasan Tombak Kyai Upas*, the welcoming of government official, the Bhineka parade held every August, the *tumpang* ritual procession held in the anniversary of Tulungagung, and in many local events held by government or community. It is also frequently being contested in schools or institutions in Tulungagung regency. Outside Tulungagung, it has been performed several times in governmental events in East Java, culture festival in TMII, and the celebration of national anniversary in Istana Merdeka Jakarta in 2016.

B. *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung Break MURI Record*

To celebrate the anniversary of Tulungagung, the government held a big performance of *Reyog Kendang* that broke MURI record (see Figure 2). It was performed by 2400 people that consisted of elementary to high school students as the representative of all the school in Tulungagung regency [10].



Fig. 2. Reyog Kendang Tulungagung broke MURI record

Doc. Muri.org

It was aesthetically interesting that the dancers did not only dance but also moved together until they formed a particular formation. The performers trained for months to prepare this performance from the selection, training in the respective school and the sub-district, then together with all the performers in Gor Lembu Peteng, the place where the performance was held. It can be imagined how hard the choreographer team work to direct and manage 2400 people. The hard work resulted in a huge success that it did not only present an outstanding performance but also break MURI record. This record breaking was significant to the existence of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* in both national and international level because many media reported this huge event.

C. *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung as Batik Pattern*

Batik has been known as Indonesia cultural heritage. Most regions in Indonesia have their distinctive batik pattern including Tulungagung. The patterns of Tulungagung batik change and develop following the trend and the interests of society. However, most designs only include animal and floral print. In addition, some producers even follow the trend of design from producers outside Tulungagung. Following this phenomenon, the researcher designed a new batik pattern with *Reyog Kendang* as the inspiration. The results of the study were 26 designs of batik pattern.

The *Reyog Kendang* pattern contains the six compulsory elements namely *kendangdhodhog*, a gong tied to its *gayor*, *kenong*, *selompret*, *iker* and *gongseng* as the main pattern and some linear pattern to complement the whole pattern. Initially, the study was conducted to fulfill the researcher's thesis. Then, in 2016, she tried to build a partnership with one of batik producers in Tulungagung regency in order to introduce, promote, and produce *Reyog Kendang* batik (see Figure 3).



Fig. 3. Red Reyog Kendang Batik

Doc. Utari, 2017

The introduction and promotion of the new pattern received a warm welcome from the public. Several local government institutions ordered the batik for office uniform or to be worn in special events. From October 2016 to October 2017, there has been more than 2500 pieces of paint and copper stamp *Reyog Kendang* batik produced. This did not only benefit the researcher, but also increase the revenue of the batik producer whom the researcher affiliated with. Moreover, the regent of Tulungagung gave his appreciation and wanted the pattern to be further developed and registered to HAKI as the iconic batik pattern of Tulungagung. In turn, this motivated other producer and pattern maker to create new patterns that include local traditional arts.

D. *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung Aerobic*

Among the efforts to preserve and develop *Reyog Kendang* was the launching of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung aerobic* in May 2017. It was established by the government of Tulungagung which involved PERWOSI Tulungagung (Women and Sport Association of Indonesia) and Department of Education and Sport. Mrs Wiwik Syahri Mulyo, the lady of Tulungagung regent, when interviewed by a television, stated that the launching of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung aerobic* was created as a part of Tulungagung government's attempt to preserve local cultures. (doc. timesmalang.com)

The launching of this traditional-based aerobic that adopt the choreography of *Reyog Kendang* did not only aim to get the society to exercise but also to introduce *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* to youngsters and housewife. The moves of this aerobic adopt much of the *Reyog Kendang* choreography which were then simplified and modified into typical aerobic moves. The music accompaniment of this aerobic contained the same music used in *Reyog Kendang* such as the tune from *slompret*, *kendang dhodhog*, *kenong* and *gong*. Thus, ones would feel like dancing when doing this gym since both the moves and the music were adopted from dance which was different from the common aerobic.

E. *The Miniature of Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*

It is essential to create a different range of innovation in preserving local cultures such as practiced by Siswoyo as reported by the website of Jawa Pos Radar Tulungagung 19 July 2017 [6]. Based on Figure 4, Siswoyo, who is known as

Reyog Kendang Tulungagung equipment maker, now creates a miniature set of *Reyog Kendang* gamelan from the wood waste in making *kendang*. Although entirely made of wood, this set of miniature still prioritizes the resemblance to the original form, such as the shape of the gong originally made of iron or bronze and golden. The miniature also painted as golden. According to Siswoyo, making this miniature requires more patience compared to making the original *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* equipment. The price of a miniature set can reach Rp. 750,000 rupiah. Despite the expensive price, these miniatures are selling well because they are often used as souvenirs for government events or as souvenirs for domestic and foreign tourists alike.



Fig. 4. Siswoyo arrange a miniature set of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*.

Doc. Jawa Pos Radar Tulungagung, 2017 [6]

F. *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung as the Mascot of Tulungagung General Election Commission*

According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, mascots refer to person, animal, or things which are treated by a group as a symbol of the bearer of good luck or safety. This mascot is commonly used as a promotional media for certain companies or events. Some mascots use element of local specialties. The shape of *kendang* which is the main feature of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* became the mascot of KPU Tulungagung (General Election Commission). The researcher has not known exactly why the distinctive *kendang* of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* was used as the mascot. However, based on the definition of mascot, it can be inferred that *Reyog Kendang* was used as promotion media for KPU Tulungagung (see Figure 5).



Fig. 5. Reyog Kendang Tulungagung Mascot.

Doc. Asburhanudin via KPU Tulungagung instagram

The researcher's analysis of the mascot's picture was as follow. The *kendang* shaped-mascot, was drawn with interesting illustration, happy facial expression, and it held a paper bearing the date of 2018 election. This mascot is likely used as a promotional event for 2018 election. The happy facial expressions signified an invitation to the Tulungagung community to not abstain in the 2018 election. It is necessary to appreciate the idea of this mascot as KPU Tulungagung got an interesting icon that could attract the public to take part in the general election. It would be good if this mascot continues to be employed in the next general elections.

V. CONCLUSION

Reyog Kendang Tulungagung is the icon of Tulungagung regency. It is a folk art, and therefore does not have specific rule regarding the time and place of the performance. It is frequently held in various traditional ceremonies, governmental events, or public events that it is special to the people of Tulungagung. The Tulungagung government attempted to make the performing art as the icon of Tulungagung regency that was recognized legally by the country. Consequently, *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* was registered to HAKI as the original performing art of Tulungagung regency in 2009. Furthermore, the local government also made a big attempt in introducing and promoting the art to the whole nation and abroad by holding a huge performance with 2400 performers in which its broke MURI record. Seeing the effort of the government in preserving this traditional art, the researcher attempted to develop a new batik pattern inspired by the six elements of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung*. The result was appreciated greatly by public that the regent of Tulungagung wanted the pattern to be developed and registered to HAKI as the original batik pattern of Tulungagung. Then, in the middle of 2017, there was the launching of the *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* aerobic established by the government of Tulungagung which involved PERWOSI (Women and Sport Association of Indonesia) and Department of Education and Sport. After that, there was the miniature equipment of *Reyog Kendang Tulungagung* which was often used as souvenirs. Finally, the latest one was the illustration of *kendang* used in *Reyog*

Kendang Tulungagung that became the mascot of KPU Tulungagung in the 2018 election.

All these actions in developing and preserving local art did not leave out the original distinctive style of Reyog Kendang Tulungagung. It did not only aim to show other regions that this performing art is the icon of Tulungagung that has rooted deep in the community but also for this art to adapt and follow the global era. It is necessary for other regions to develop similar approach as an attempt to preserve local arts and cultures that will appeal to every generation. Yet, it has to be noted that the attempt must not change the arts significantly that the arts lose their distinctive feature.

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