

# Inheriting the Values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama in Malang, Indonesia

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**Abstract**— Mask Puppet in Malang is a mask puppet show that describes some characters in Panji story from Java Island. Just a few of youth generations understand, this case threatens the existence. This work aimed to study the inheritance of the values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama in Malang, Indonesia. This research was based on the Semiotics theory that is the basic concept analyzed and interpreted by understanding the signs syntactically and semantically. This study used qualitative research method. The results of data analysis showed that the inheritance of the values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama can be viewed from the characters in the story namely Raden Gunungsari, Dewi Sekartaji, and Prabu Klana Sewandana. Syntactically (visually), the three characters have a different form of mask and dance. The inheritance of the values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama characters can syntactically and semantically raise the aesthetical and moral awareness to the traditional culture.

**Keywords**— *Mask Puppet Dance-Drama, Inheritance, Values, Character Education, Semiotics.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Mask is a face cover that is usually made of wood, paper, plastic, fabric, and metal. The form of mask in the world is various depending on the function and benefit. Anthropologically, mask and mask maker usually consider the meaning and symbolism of mask and social function of ritual mask [1]. In the Western society, that is developed, mask is consistently used in Drama Education although usually through the specific knowledge of the practice of Drama and Theater that they are contextualized [2]. In Greek, mask is used as the main support in a drama or theater performance [3]. Mask becomes the part of a transformation process, and it was never seen in the fifth century as the autonomy object [4]. Mask can also be used in developing the youth identity, as an expression that is the use of mask can support the individual to free him/herself [5].

In Indonesia, mask has been introduced since the era of the Gajayana Kingdom. The appreciation of certain mask is realized in the form of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama show. Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang is a mask performance describing some characters in Panji story. The Panji story is the corpus of the story of the Kediri Kingdom from East Java, with the theme of heroism and love centered in the character of Panji Asmorobangun and Dewi Sekartaji. The theme of Panji in Southeast Asia is the manifestation of

political and cultural influence of Majapahit in this area. The Majapahit Kingdom in East Java (about 1300 to 1500) expanded its authority to the majority of today areas in Indonesia, and to the Southeast Asia mainland, and this kingdom applied the characteristic that is rich in culture. The Panji story becomes a popular literary genre today and the part of culture [6].

Mask Puppet Dance-Drama show is a performance art. The performance art shows the very specific expertise especially for each domain such as the skill needed to play [7]. In the performance art, the players are between the stability and instability. Engaging talent and skill could create the players' talent and position it correctly in the area that is usually absurd between the insanity and sanity [8]. Some figures in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama show the diversity of figure's characteristics, movement characteristics, and costume characteristic. Each group of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama has the way to maintain the art existence from packaging the performance art, inheritance strategy to the promotion model done. For example, the inheritance process needs a teaching strategy which is necessary to study. Not only from the aspect of the movement, but also the characteristics of the mask, costume, and the musical accompaniment or the values. Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang, as one of the performance arts of tradition, can be bequeathed to the next generation to keep the existence of local culture in globalization advance; one of them is the inheritance of values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang.

The previous research related to the inheritance was, for example, conducted by Jazuli [9] finding three puppeteer learning models namely (1) puppeteer learning model in the school with a tight system and regulation such as curriculum, learning schedule, as well as competency and graduation standards. (2) puppeteer learning model out of the school namely course institution. (3) puppeteer learning model out of the school in the form of art house. Another research of Jazuli was about the model of inheritance process of Sawitri Generation Mask Dance in Purwa Kencana studio. Another research was about the model of inheritance of Soreng art player [10]. Masunah [11] also explained the inheritance process of Sawitri generation Mask Dance in Purwa Kencana studio. The three researches studied the model and process of inheritance. The researches

of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama are highly related to the symbolic meaning, analysis of movement diversity, and visualization of character's characteristics. Meanwhile, there was no research that focused on the inheritance model of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang di Malang Regency. Therefore, the purpose of this research was examining the inheritance model of the values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang in the Hermitage of Asmoro Bangun Mask in Kedungmonggo Village, Pakisaji Subdistrict, Malang Regency. The results of this research give some benefits in the form of information and documentation that can be utilized as a reference in conducting a research or next study.

The inheritance of values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama is a significant thing in preserving traditional culture during the development of globalization stream. The inheritance behavior functions as a mediation variable in the relation between the acculturation behavior and entertainment product from the heritage culture [12]. The diverse techniques of teaching, learning, and pedagogy are recommended to provoke the moral, values, and ethics in the students' mind and develop the various skills and attributes needed to be successful in science and knowledge [13]. The values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama should be used as the principle when facing the other values. The technological advance could influence behavior, in this case, is cultural behavior. This case contributes much in the cultural value shift including the change of manner. The things that are previously regarded good, right, moral norms, now are not anymore, even the things that are formerly taboo, wrong, amoral, today are considered common thing even they are viewed as a trend which is slang and modern among teenagers; in other words those things are good and right.

Academically, the benefit of this research is the contribution in giving the analysis of the knowledge especially regarding the inheritance model of values of Malang Mask Puppet Dance-Drama in the Hermitage of Asmoro Bangun Mask Art in Kedungmonggo Village, Malang Regency. For the group of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama in Malang, the results of this research can be utilized as the material of documentation or reinforcement of appreciation, creation, and expression.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes the proposed methodology. Section III presents the obtained results and following by discussion. Finally, Section IV concludes this work.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This work is a qualitative research using interdisciplinary approach. This research used anthropological and art approach.

### A. Object and Background

The research object was focused on the inheritance model of values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang especially in the Hermitage of Amorobangun Mask Art, Kedungmonggo Village, Malang Regency, Indonesia.

The research background of the inheritance model of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang is in Kedungmonggo

Village as the place of the development of mask dance of Malang, the active inheritee of Mask Puppet of Malang, the master of Malangese karawitan (traditional music), artist that is consistent in preserving and developing Malangese dance, as well as supporting people in formal and non formal education. The reason of choosing the research location is that Dramatari Mask Puppet is always performed every Sunday legi night to educate the young generation. Kedungmonggo village is still active in preserving Dramatari Mask Puppet so that enabled the research was easily conducted.

### B. The Data Source

The primary data sources in this research were the original sources in the form of documents and the other relics from historical data of study object, the key speakers consisting of mask dance artists namely the owner of the studio as well as the trainer, puppeteer learners, and the learners' parents. The secondary data sources were people/artists who gave information from the second party and they are considered exactly know the problem being explored, the relevant documents, and the art performance associated with this research.

### C. Data Collection Technique and Data Analysis

The first step in the research of the inheritance of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang was collecting the data related to the inheritance of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang by commonly observing and engaging in the activity. In this case, the researchers acted as the citizen meaning that they did participant observation, noted the observation results followed by visual recording helped by a camera and Handycam.

The second stage conducted by the researchers was a deep interview with the key informant of form, character, fashion, music, and inheritance process of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama in Malang Regency. The third phase was to guarantee the validity of the data gained; the researchers carried out the data triangulation so that one weakness of the data was tested by the data attained from the other data sources.

The analysis of art research is more imaginative, flexible, creative, and reactive, and it must be a methodological truth; it shows the high expertise and intellectual skill. The data were analyzed using semiotics approach. The basic concept was analyzed and interpreted by understanding the signs of visual form syntactically. The understanding process was then done semantically. The visual signs were analyzed using semiotics of Roland Barthes [14]. The validity of the data was executed by checking the triangulation during the data collection.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The performance of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang is a complex art since it has some elements connecting each other. It does not only involve the artist but also needs the other elements such as manuscript, actors, director, cosmetology, fashion, lighting, the stage, sound and audience. The characterization of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama is the characters of Panji story. Based on the results of interview with Handoyo the (interview was conducted in

October 7, 2017). There are 76 characters in Panji story divided into protagonist, antagonist, and tritagonist as well as the extras. The director in this dance-drama is called dalang that has an important role in a performance. Dalang is a leader behind the scene that manages the performance as the central figure in delivering the dialogues of some characters of the story. The story of this dance-drama is Panji story. The musical instrument that is used is gamelan completed with pelog. Meanwhile, the time and place of the performance are chosen in accordance with the order.

Handoyo (in the interview) divides the mask characters into five groups namely antagonist, protagonist, animal, good, buto (giant), and evil. There are 20 antagonist characters, 25 protagonist characters, 6 evil characters, 8 good characters, 10 buto (giant) characters, and 7 animal characters. Not all masks which are always used in the performance; the use of mask is adjusted to the story being presented. From 76 masks, there are five masks become the main characters in the performance namely Klana Sewandana, Panji Asmorobangun, Sekartaji (Candrakirana), Ragil kuning and Gunung Sari, as stated by Hidajat [15]. Besides, there is a main character considered the center of the Mask Puppet Dance-Drama performance namely Patih that is always present in the opening ceremony called bang-Tih dance or Beskalan Patih dance [16].

The learners in the Hermitage of Asmorobangun Mask Art are taught the topic of mask dance, while the other dance creations only become the interlude event to make the children do not get bored. Elisa Lena Sari (11 years old), one of the learners in the Hermitage of Amorobangun Mask Art that joins the kids class or morning class, stated that the topics that have been learned are, for example, Grebeg Sabrang Dance, Kebyok Anting-anting, Reog Cemanden, Bapang, Joro Berek, Patih, and Beskalan Putri. Meanwhile, Sekar Puspita Ayu (16 years old), one of the learners that follows adult class addressed that the topics that have been learned are, for example, Bapang dance, Grebeg Sabrang dance, Grebeg Jawa dance. The topics that have been learned by the learners could prepare them to join Mask Puppet Dance-Drama performance. According to Handoyo (in the interview), the learners could join mask puppet show after one-year learning. This case is done, according to Handoyo, in order the learners well understand the forms and movement techniques or the technique in playing the music while dancing in the performance.

The topic of mask dance taught in the Mask Art Studio is a cultural inheritance. The preservation method must have an organization that makes a change and a systematical management procedure for maintenance [17]. The concept of inheritance adopts the real world that is an entity/object could have a derivative entity/object [18]. Jazuli also stated that inheritance is about mentoring and preserving of the elements of the show from old generation (the generation that bequeaths) and young generation (the bequeathed generation) and the inheritance of values in family and society. The inheritance or transmission of cultural value is something that is generated from one generation to the next generation although it is difficult to trace the origin [19]. It also means as a transmission process of culture from one generation to the next generation [17].

Based on the observation result, interview, obtained document, and reference, the inheritance of the values of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang can give a moral message to the learners and this case is viewed using semiotics theory and studied in two things namely syntactically and semantically. The inheritance has a very good role to the learners, not only from the aspect of character's acting that will be discussed, the music also has a good benefit to the children. The inheritance role in music and cognition perceptions and how far the culture could influence are reflected in brain function. Exploring the music cognition from the cultural point of view would result in better understanding of the principal process that underlies the perception and how such process results in the diversity of form and expression of music in the world [20].

The actualization of figures in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama can be seen from the dance movement of each character and mask used in the show and characterization that contains character values that can be transmitted to the learners as the form of local and cultural preservation. The visual sign of the mask model and dance movement characteristics, as well as the character values implied in the characters of Mask Puppet Dramatari of Malang were analyzed using semiotics approach. The basic concept was analyzed and interpreted by understanding the signs of visual form syntactically. The understanding process was undertaken semantically. The visual signs were analyzed using semiotics of Roland Barthes [14]. The characters that were studied in this work are the main characters in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama show namely Raden Gunungsari, Dewi Sekartaji, and Prabu Klana Sewandana. The three characters have different characteristics.

#### A. Syntactical and Semantical Description of Raden Gunungsari

The visual form or syntactical model of Raden Gunungsari in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama performance is performed with special visualization. The visualization of Raden Gunungsari's characteristics from the protagonist group is shown in Figure 1.



Fig 1. Visualization of Raden Gunungsari

Raden Gunungsari is one of the protagonist characters or the center of the story in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama show.

The visualization of Raden Gunungsari is like the following characteristics: the form is triangle, the color is green, the eyebrow is curved (the tip is curved and thin) or in the Javanese term it is blarak sineret, the eyes are symmetrical narrow (gabahan), the nose is sharply pointed, the mustache has the motive of anjelok cat, the crown used is gelung, with sumping garuda mungkur in the left and right sides of the crown. The line elements of Panji Asmorobangun look thin in the eyebrow, eyes, mustache, and chin. Raden Gunungsari is one of the protagonist characters or the center of the story in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama show. The visualization of Raden Gunungsari is like the following characteristics: the form is triangle, the color is green, the eyebrow is curved (the tip is curved and thin) or in the Javanese term it is blarak sineret, the eyes are symmetrical narrow (gabahan), the nose is sharply pointed, the mustache has the motive of anjelok cat, the crown used is gelung, with sumping garuda mungkur in the left and right sides of the crown. The line elements of Panji Asmorobangun look thin in the eyebrow, eyes, mustache, and chin.

The setting of eye model is adjusted to the form of the nose. The texture happens to the close colors for the small spaces on the crown. The eyes model has various sizes with the form of eyebrow between the form of nose and mustache and the eyes can also aesthetically perform the principle of different comparison between the size of the nose, the form of the eyes, and the element of color.

Gunungsari is the character that mostly has many movement motives. The movement motive generally portrays fowl animal like special models such as merak ngigel, merak ngombe, biyodo mususi and the others. There are 24 games of Gunungsari but they have been rarely performed since their duration has been too long that possibly causes the audience get bored. Gunungsari dance is masculine, smooth, narrow in movement volume, slow motion rhythm, does not have foot base, sirig movement, and walking movement (labas lombo), but only has walking movement called labas kerak or nggelap.

Form in dance is a textual study meaning that the phenomenon of dance is seen as a physical form (text) that relatively stands alone, can be read, studied and analyzed textually in accordance with the concept of the understanding. Dance is a form or structure that is empirically visible from the outside, it does not need to connect to the inside structure. According to Sumandiyo Hadi [21], the syntactical study in the phenomenon of dance can be analyzed or studied choreographically, structurally, or symbolically.

Semantically, the meaning of movement contains the values and understanding arising from the physical power, feeling, and the soul of presenter in providing the meaning in the communication. The character's movement with the qualified and physical form characteristic by the power and feeling of presenter has a meaningful sense. The learners learn any types of movement from some characters in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama of Malang show. The character values in Gunungsari dance indicate that the movement of bird, fish, and woman is the symbol of beauty. The figure of Gunungsari is a character that is full of beauties or too pleasing, has a smooth motion, but has a tough characteristic

that is not easily separated and can keep the feeling. According to Hidajat, Gunungsari is one relation with the entity of 'Pundhen,' symbol of 'pancer' that becomes the center of life [15]. Gunungsari becomes the main character that as the center of the life of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama performance.

Character education learning for Raden Gunungsari contains the values of constancy, spirit, and persistence. The character education learning through movie shows that it can increase the students' concentration and stimulate the motivation to be more active and aggressive [22]. Puppet can be a media to open the learner's thought in exploring the values of personality that can be applied in life [16] [23].

#### B. Syntactical and Semantical Description of Dewi Sekartaji

Syntactical description of Putri Sekartaji is that Dewi Galuh Candrakirana (Sekartaji) means that the first name of Galuh shows the characteristic of a lady (woman) such as the first name of Siti, Sri, Parwati, Dyah, or Ratna. Meanwhile, Candrakirana is the combination of two words consisting of "Candra" that means shining, and "Kirana" which means moon. Candrakirana is the moonlight when full moon. This case is one of the descriptions that Galuh Candrakirana is a very beautiful lady with a shining face like the full moonlight. Dewi Galuh Candrakirana is taken from the prototype of one of Arjuna's wives that is Dewi Rara Sumbadra (Dewi Rara Ireng), the little cousin of Prabu Kresna. Taking the woman prototype in puppet is to build a relationship that Arjuna and Sumbadro is a harmonical couple. The physical identity of Dewi Galuh Candrakirana includes white mask, black kemben/mekak (a cloth that covers the chest), a bright color-long cloth (jarit), and a mask. These things are shown by the dresscode used in Sekarsari dance. The white color in Dewi Galuh Candrakirana mask is an emotional color regarding the world thing that raises any kinds of human's characteristic that is always motivated by profit. Human will be always in the condition of "nggrangsang" or "kadaya-daya", chasing the world material. The ambitious characteristic should be avoided because the world interest will be finally left [15]. The visualization of Dewi Sekartaji is shown in Figure 2.



Fig 2. Visualization of Dewi Sekartaji

Semantically, the character of Dewi Sekartaji has a characteristic of Dewi Sekartaji dance movement that tends to be narrow in volume or smooth. Dance is an integrated theme arising in any combinations (Susan, 1988). The concept and theme of the dance are separately discussed and the relation between them is shown and combined at the end. The meaning of character values of gracefulness, loyalty, patience, challenge, not easily being desperate, mercifulness, and sensitivity. The white mask represents the characteristic of honesty (a knight's characteristic). The value of belief and faith habituated in Mask Puppet Dance-Drama could become a need or completeness of the related society. Not only the realization that is transmitted but also the values and norms applied and held by people supporting them. The norms and values of life generated by parents are always highly respected. Dewi Sekartaji is a relation of "river", the symbol of 'urip', that is the power that makes the life still alive [15]. The characteristic of Sekartaji who is loving and challenged and does not easily get desperate. is a symbol of power to sustain in life.

### C. Syntactical and Semantical Description of Prabu Klana Sewandana

Prabu Klana Sewandana is one of the antagonist figures against the protagonist ones. The visualization of Prabu Klana Sewandana is shown in Figure 3.



Fig 3. Visualization of Prabu Klana Sewandana

Prabu Klana Sewandana is Sabrang King and Sabrang Prime Minister described as the one that has a big-size body, bad characteristic, and very rough attitude, red costume, red long cloth and gongseng. His eyebrows are curved, and the tip of the eyebrow is thick. His eyes are round and wide; his gaze is sharp; his nose is sharply pointed directing with a little bit bigger size of the bottom part; the face is round. Meanwhile, the syntactical description from the aspect of movement is like as follow: a big volume-movement motive, the firm movement line and walking movement called labas (lamba and kerep). The models of movement that more accentuate the power are such as Srodokan movement, or wider labas movement.

Semantical description of Prabu Klana Sewandana is that the mask and red costume become the symbol meaning that in the sabrang figure there is a wrath feeling, always wants to dominate. Klana Sewandana is related to village. It is the

symbol of behavior in life. It is relevant to this research of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama [15]. The red mask represents anger characteristic (brangasan). The character values are brave, mysterious, honest, authoritative, smart, rebellious, emotional, and sensitive. This case is in line with Hidajat's statement, that Kelana Sewandana relates to "Village", as the symbol of the behavior experience of human's life [15]. 'Behavior' in Klana Sewandana figure means that someone always attempts and tries without desperation.

### IV. CONCLUSION

Mask Puppet Dance-Drama as a traditional performance art should be preserved in the advance of knowledge and technology. This mask puppet is a show played by some characters of Panji story using mask that has semantical values. The main figures that are discussed are Raden Gunungsari, Putri Sekartaji, and Prabu Klana Sewandana. Raden Gunungsari has the semantical meaning of obedience, spirit, and honesty. The semantical meanings of Dewi Sekartaji character are honest, graceful, confident, loyal, patient, challenged, not easily being desperate, and loving. Meanwhile, the semantic meanings of Prabu Klana Sewandana character are brave, mysterious, honest, authoritative, smart, rebellious, emotional, and sensitive. The semantic meaning of the main figure of Mask Puppet Dance-Drama has the character values that can be transmitted to foster the aesthetic and moral awareness towards traditional culture.

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