

Reflection of the Cosmology of the Headband of the Selo Community on the *Sedekah Gunung Merapi*

Purwanto

Faculty of Languages and Art, Universitas Negeri Semarang
Kampus Sekarang Gunungpati Semarang 50229, Indonesia
purwantomayangsari@gmail.com

Abstract—This study aims to understand and explain the aesthetic symbol of headband worn by the Selo people in the Merapi mountain alms ritual in relation to cosmology. Using interdisciplinary theoretical studies, with a qualitative descriptive approach, the author tries to explain this problem holistically and deeply. There are eleven kinds of headbands worn by the Selo community in the Mount Merapi alms ritual ceremony, which function pragmatically, aesthetically, ethically, which has a social and transcendental dimension. The square shape of the headband symbolizes the four passions that exist in human beings, namely, anger, aluamah, sufiah, and mutmainah. The four passions are managed in harmony to protect the mind. The square sheet is diagonally folded into a triangular shape with three angles that reflect the cosmological attitude of the Selo people, who always try to maintain the harmony and regularity of the relationship between the environment, humans, and God. On the other hand, the triangle shape is also meant as a symbol of integrity, namely the union between mind, feeling, and will in humans. It can be concluded that in the aesthetic symbol the headband reflects the views of the society towards its cosmos.

Keywords—cosmology, headband, sedekah gunung.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ritual activities are one of the characteristics of the needs in traditional community life. The ritual activity integrates the needs of the community, both those with transcendental and social dimensions, and can become a liaison medium for their past related to issues of place, time, and important figures that must be remembered and respected [1]. Rituals can also be a medium of enculturation of values, knowledge, and beliefs in the culture of a society [2].

Selo Boyolali Sub-district of Central Java has a specific ritual tradition, which is held every one Mukharam (Suro) which is called the Merapi mountain alms ritual. The implementation of the Merapi volcanic ritual tradition, the Selo community worked on into a complex cultural event, in which there were a cultural carnival and a traditional art performance held by each *padukuhan*, which was able to mobilize the participation of all elements of society. The implementation of the Merapi volcanic ritual gave rise to a variety of community creativity, one of the interesting phenomena was the emergence of headband (iket) variants used by the people. Various forms of headbands are created not only to fulfill their pragmatic need but to be part of the

need for symbolic aesthetic expression that integrates the potential of knowledge, tastes, adaptation to the environment and their needs orientation, as well as their beliefs.

How the symbolic aesthetic form and its relation to the cosmology of the headband worn by the Selo people in the mountain alms ritual are an important focus of this paper. Using analysis based on interdisciplinary theory, it is hoped that a holistic and in-depth understanding of the problem can be obtained.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were collected by interview, observation, and document study. The collected data are analyzed using interactive analysis flow from Miles and Huberman [3], using measures including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Javanese Aesthetics and Cosmology

Javanese aesthetics always emphasize the meaning contained in every expression of artwork and its relation to traditional cultural values that bind it. The characteristics of Javanese aesthetics in Sachari's view are: transcendental, symbolic, and philosophical in nature [4].

The Javanese society views the Universe as a representation of the omnipotence of God, referred to as the great cosmos or macrocosm, and humans who have the same substance in the universe as a microkosmos. Ideal thinking in the life of Javanese people, the balance and perfection of life can occur if someone is able to unite his microcosm with the macrocosm. Commonly referred to like the concept of *manunggaling kawula lan Gusti* [5] [6] [7]. This concept can occur when humans in their behavior always reflect the Illahiyah nature (good in social and transcendental dimensions). Humans are obliged to maintain the harmony of life in a harmonious, harmonious and balanced relationship with fellow humans, the environment (nature that is physical and non-physical/supernatural), and God.

B. Mountain Alms Rituals

During the 2017 Merapi mountain alms ritual, Jarot Sujarwo of Selo Sub-district Head in his speech conveyed the purpose of Mount Merapi alms ritual, namely: 1) the formation of harmony and mutual cooperation among citizens. 2) as a cultural event that can attract tourists. 3) as an expression of gratitude to God Almighty, who has given the beautiful and fertile Selo earth. 4) as an expression of prayer so that God always gives an abundance of grace, grace, safety, and prosperity for the people of Selo. From the contents of the remarks, it can be understood that the Merapi Mountain Alms ritual activities have undergone a shift. The ritual activities which were original of religious dimension have now become complex because they intersect with the interests of tourism. Mount Merapi sadaqah ritual has become a mass activity that is able to move all elements of society, into an expression of the identity of the community. In its implementation, there is a collaboration between the local community, schools in the local area, Boyolali District Government, Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, and other supporting parties.

The cultural adaptation strategy scheme will eventually turn into a pattern of modern life, the ritual phenomenon in society will relate to other relations that are rational, practical, and pragmatic [8]. Although the implementation of the Mountain Alms Ritual has undergone a shift in orientation, its existence has always been able to integrate various interests of the community. Mountain alms ritual has even become a cultural identity for the Selo people, who have systemically tied their social life.

The Selo community believes that the spirits and spirits of the ancestors existed were in an unseen unseen space. The Selo community believes that these spirits can give positive or negative influences on humans. The ritual implementation basically becomes one of the forms of respect for these fine creatures in order to obtain harmony of life. On the other hand, the ritual was also functioned as a means of approaching themselves with God. Prayers offered at the ritual always hope that the Almighty God protects and blesses their lives.

C. Form of Headband Aesthetic of the Selo Community

The headband worn by the Selo community in the mountain alms ritual can be classified into groups as follows. The first group is a group of organizers, village retainer, formal and non-formal figures, wearing Javanese-style Solo attire with *beskap jangkep* complete with *keris* and Solo-style *blangkon* headdresses, and for those who wear Yogyakarta-style Javanese/*ageman Surjan*, wear *blangkon* style Yogyakarta. *Blangkon's* aesthetic form seems official and reflects the strata of the upper class society.

The second group is the community members participating in the ritual outside the important groups above. They wear headbands with various variations that are created according to their choices. It can be identified the various forms of headband used by the people of Selo community when the Merapi mountain alms ritual is as follows.

Iket Warokan. This headband has a type which resembles with a headband worn by the Warok in the Reog performance. The characteristics of the headband reflect the

polite and authoritative character with batik headband with a black background. Blumbangan batik motifs are widely chosen for this headband.

Iket Jungkitan. In this headband, at the end of the right and left side, there are two bulges that are the same height so that the shape is like a squat. This type of *Jungkitan iket* is widely used by citizens when trading to the market. It can use batik cloth that has a black or white background. *Iket Keprajuritan*. This type of headband resembles with headbands used by soldiers in the Kethoprak performance. It is simple, imposing a straightforward, dynamic and dashing character. The background color of the fabric used varies from red, green and black.

Iket Sorengan. This type of headband is expressive, with the tip dangling up and down. It is a form associated with a headband worn by Soreng's figure on a Kethoprak performance with a strong, brave, temperamental and powerful character. It is the chosen soldier from the Duchy of Jipang Panolan in the Hario Penangsang era. The batik cloth used is dark or bright, and is also polychromatic. *Iket Mentahunan*. This type of headband expresses an adult/old person, the character of someone whose life has ruled out the worldly and prioritizes the *ukrawiyah*. It is the headband form association commonly used by the spiritual figure of the Duchy of Jipang Panolan named Mentahun. The type of cloth used in batik pattern with a bright background.

Iket Koncer. This type of headband resembles a soldier iket's shape but the two ends of the fabric are left hanging long. This form of the headband is often found in the lives of people around Bagelen, Kebumen, and Tegal. The shape of the headband impresses relaxed but is manly and authoritative. *Iket MBalen*. This form of the headband is like a headband worn by Balinese people. The headband is wrapped around the head but the top of the head is open. This type of headband impresses relaxed and polite, much like young age groups because it is practical and fashionable. The fabrics used tend to be polychromatic, and many of them are ornamented with prada coloring.

Iket Srumbung. This type of headband is essentially a shape like a *sarong* which is usually used to protect the head when it is cold. But the shape of the sarong can be modified for various functions, including headbands. The shape of the headband is simple but quite artistic and practical for everyday use. The cloth used in this headband is a *batik motif*, with new creations. *Iket Jithengan*. This type of headband is used by the community in everyday life as an expression of politeness in a social context. This type of headband reflects courage, modesty, and simplicity.



D. Symbolism and Cosmology in Headbands

The head is a very important part of the human organ because in the head there is a brain that is used for thinking. The existence of the brain in the human head both denotatively and connotatively which means the mind needs to be protected, and the headband for the Selo community is functioned as a protector of the contents of the head. Another function is to fulfill aesthetic needs as a complement to dress, expression of politeness in social interaction and symbolic meaning in relation to social and transcendental dimensions.

The basic headband is squared, made from one-size batik cloth (110 x 110 cm). The Selo community understands the square shape as a symbolic manifestation of the *Keblat Papat Limo Pancer* concept of. The four square corners as a symbol of four passions, namely, *aluamah*, *amarah*, *sufiah*, and *mutmainah*. The human position must be able to stand upright in the middle and can manage these four passions so that they are balanced and positive for the attainment of life's perfection.

Regarding the concept of *keblat papat limo pancer*, there is also a meaning based on Hindu beliefs, such things can be understood considering syncretism Hindu-Islamic-Javanese beliefs are very strong in the life of the Selo people. The Selo community associates the four angles with the direction of the wind. North direction is identical with black, iron, Wage or Cemengan market day, and the god Wisnu. The east direction is identical to white, silver, Kliwon or Kasih market day, and Shiva's god. The south direction is identical with red, copper, Legi or Manis market day, and the goddess Brahma. The West direction is identical with yellow, gold, Pon or Jenar market day, and the god Kuwera. And what is in the center as the center is the existence of man himself must be able to stand upright in a vertical line with the arsy of the Lord of God of *Jagad Raya*, as a reflection of *manunggaling kawula lan gusti*.

The middle position is symbolized by tertiary/brown color, Pahing or Palguna market day, which has the highest count symbol of 9 as a symbol of perfection. Then from the rectangular shape, so that it can be wrapped around the head must be folded diagonally so that it is triangular in shape. These three angles are interpreted as three elements of life, namely God, the environment, and humans. In the fabric of life the three elements cannot be separated. The concept of the fabric of life is a cosmological concept of the Selo

community, that humans must be able to live in harmony, with God, fellow human beings, and with the environment (the natural environment is physical and non-physical, including with subtle beings); which are harmoniously arranged, harmonious and balanced. The concept of cosmology is used as a 'protector of the mind', in order to obtain a good and right life, related to its existence as an individual, social, and godly being.

The triangle shape of the headband is also interpreted as a symbol of integrity. Three potentials that exist within human beings, namely creativity, taste, and intention, must be controlled consistently, leading to the highest quality of life with *illahiyyah* behavior. This degree of *illahiyyah* life, which is the desire of all people, the position of the headband is not the only function pragmatically but becomes a marker that educates anyone in order to maintain self-integrity.

IV. CONCLUSION

Various types of ethical forms of the Selo community headband worn when following the Merapi mountain alms ritual, are a symbol of the aesthetic expressions of the traditions of society which are full of meaning, which functions practically, aesthetically, and symbolically with social and transcendental dimensions. In the headband, there is an educational message constructed from the public's view of the environment of the cosmos. The order of life is understood by the Selo people like the ability to maintain the harmony of their lives in relation to their relationship with the natural environment, metaphysical, social environment, and with their God, which must be kept in harmony, harmony, and balance.

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