

Punakawan in N. Riantiarno's Dramas: Revitalization of Local Cultural Values in Modern Theater

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Abstract – *In the puppet world there are Punakawan figures (Semar, Petruk, Gareng, and Bagong) who represent commoners, loyal servants, and they become a vehicle for raise people's voices to be of concern to all community circles. Behind the Punakawan figures, the values of wisdom and local wisdom are stored in relation to human characters, relationships between people, and human relations with nature and the environment. The existence and potential of the Punakawan are explored maximally in N. Riantiarno's hands as an effective vehicle to raise awareness to the theater audience about the conditions that the Indonesian people are communally facing. The potential of Punakawan is elaborated in the five literary works of the drama which were then staged, namely "Republik Bagong," "Republic of Togog," "Republic of Petruk," "Republic of Cangik," and "Semar Gugat," from which can be derived one perspective voiced by the Punakawan related to various social, political, economic and cultural issues that are developing in the life of the nation and the state of Indonesia. In addition, reading these works revealed Riantiarno's efforts to revitalize the Punakawan as a cultural entity that contained local cultural values, which derive from the nobility of Javanese cultural values. They are present in the treasures of modern theater and are able to articulate local cultural values into the modern urban world stage. In that case, wayang stories are articulated as discourses of traditional art performances embodied in the world of modern theater, especially in the hands of N. Riantiarno as both the playwright and the director.*

Keywords – *revitalization, cultural entities, local culture, traditional arts.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional puppet performance art (wayang) grows and develops in Javanese and Balinese culture. Its stories are explored from the Ramayana epic or Mahabharata epics originating from India. In its development the wayang stories spread to the Malay world in the form of saga, including "Hikayat Lima Pandawa" and "Hikayat Sri Rama." Acculturation of both stories was inevitable, allowing various local cultures and religions came into the story. One form of acculturation between Hindu culture and Islamic culture is carried out by Sunan Kalijaga by incorporating Islam in Java, such as the Kalimusada talisman (an heirloom owned by Yudhistira) identified with the shahada (Islamic faith confession). In the story of Sri Rama, the story begins with Adam, as the first man. In addition, there is the use of the term "Dewata Mulia Raya" as a replacement of the gods in Hinduism. The acculturation process also occurred by the emergence of new archipelago-specific figures in the epic Mahabharata, namely the Punakawan (Semar, Petruk, Gareng, and Bagong) who served the Pandawa knights and also Cangik, Togog, and Bilung who served the Kurawa knights in the wayang world, especially in Javanese, Sundanese and Balinese cultures.

In the puppet world, the Punakawan represent the forms and voices of ordinary people, who are always loyal servants of the knights, and they become a vehicle to speak the voice of the people to gain the attention of all circles, especially those in power. Behind the Punakawan leaders, there are values of wisdom and local wisdom which are woven in relation to human character, human relations, human relations with nature and the environment.

Such existence and potential of Punakawan are explored by N. Riantiarno in his theater works and playwrights. There are several titles of the drama that use the names of the Punakawan, namely "Republic of Bagong," "Republic of Togog," "Republic of Petruk," "Republic of Cangik," and "Semar Gugat." The only person who has not been used the title is the Gareng figure.

The discussion about N. Riantiarno's works focuses on the main problem, namely "how the Punakawan leaders (as local cultural discourses) are revitalized as a vehicle in modern drama / theater to convey certain discourses related to social, political, cultural, economy involved in current conditions." Based on that, this article discusses 1) How are the Punakawan presented in those five dramas; 2) How are the presentations of the Punakawan reveal discourses relevant to social, political and cultural topics in Indonesia. The transfer of traditional discourse into a modern one regarding the Punakawan figure in modern literary and theater drama gave rise to the issue which conventional elements that survived and which were adapted along demand of the modern world. Forms of revitalization, on the surface or on an ideological level, in the round of work by N. Riantiarno, are worth to be explored. This is the importance of the process of reading and analyzing of this article.

II. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

To discuss the subjects of revitalization of Punakawan in the five dramas of N. Riantiarno, textual approach to intrinsic elements of the texts, especially characters and characterizations as well as other closely related intrinsic elements are used. Interpretation of those elements are related to the characters, characterization, sequence, and context with aspects of cultural

reality, social, political aspects of approaches related to the sociology of literature. Also, literary sociology approach is used so that how literary relations interact with the dynamic outside the text in a certain period can be seen. Literature is the crystallization of beliefs, values and norms that become consensus in the society (Escarpit, 2017: ix). Literature is a social product made by the writer. Therefore, as part of a society, writers have an important role in the study of literary sociology. By linking the creator with his work, it can be traced to the ideology and thought of the age he put forward. Through these approaches, the comprehensive meaning of revitalization of Punakawan as a local culture in the dramas by N. Riantiarno can contribute to the existing body of research on the works of N. Riantiarno. The discussion of the five literary texts of the drama was developed with descriptive methods, namely the exposition of the drama texts with a focus on characters and characterization, series of events. The results of the description are analyzed qualitatively, especially to interpret various textual phenomena in the drama text and their relevance to aspects outside of the literature related to the cultural, social and political dynamics during the publication of the works.

A. Power in Five Drama Works by N. Riantiarno

Broadly speaking, the five dramas by N. Riantiarno speak of power. Power seems to be a basic theme developed into topics that are closely related to Indonesia's conditions at a certain time. N. Riantiarno worked on the theme through Punakawan figures who were positioned to take control of the kingdom. Through these clerics, N. Riantiarno showed a consistent attitude in his speech, namely the country of Amarta (where the Punakawan Punakawan) experienced chaotic situations due to the intervention of Betari Permoni and Kalika; Semar and Krishna - as advisers to the Punakawan Punakawan - were not in their respective positions; and the Punakawan Punakawan are under the influence of evil characters.

The chaotic situation of the kingdom of Amarta shows how the management of the state is based on a mere spirit of power without regard to common interests. The common thread of the five dramas becomes relevant when linked to the reality that developed in the reform era. In the five plays, the Pakakawan (Bagong, Petruk, Togog, Cangik, and Semar) played an important role amidst Amarta's chaotic conditions. The following description is the discussion of the five dramas.

B. Succession in "Republic of Bagong"

The first work discussed in this section is "Republik Bagong" which tells about Bagong (the youngest son of Semar) who wanted to be sacrificed by the Punakawan. The kingdom of Amarta was said to have the Great Adviser named Begawan Kalapati. He gave an advice and requests to Yudhistira as the king of Amarta. The other four Punakawan (Bima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sadewa) could not do anything due to the advice and requests of the cleric, when the country was faced with various disasters. There were three conditions for Amarta to be free from the disasters that struck it, namely to dismiss Semar as an adviser of the knights, control the dreams of the people with strict discipline, and offer human sacrifice from the Semar breed (the oldest or the youngest).

Semar was sacked, strict discipline was upheld for the people, there was only one problem left, namely killing Bagong as a sacrifice. Arjuna and Gatotkaca were chosen to search for Bagong and carry out the task. However, their efforts are not easy, because various social and political situations which develop in such a way. The emergence of the Srikandi Party which won the election succeeded in raising Bagong to become the king in Amarta with his governor Srikandi. The party defeated the Lesmono Party supported by Sengkuni. With his authority, Bagong changed the name of the Amarta kingdom to Bagong Republic. However, under his rule, the country continued to be hit by chaos. To resolve the chaos, Bagong really hoped for a helping hand from Semar and Krishna, but the two figures did not come to help.

The drama "Republik Bagong" was written and staged in 2001 –three years after 1998 Reformation event. Within those years, there was a very drastic change in Indonesia's national leadership. The new government under B.J. Habibie (replacing Soeharto who resigned on the ladder on May 21, 1998) tried to reorganize the life of the state because the results of the 1997 Election (executive and legislative) were deemed unreliable. In that case, Habibie accelerated the holding of elections to elect representatives (MPR and DPR) who would then elect the President and Vice President. The election was then held in 1999 (June 7), and as a result, it shortened his term of office as President of the Republic of Indonesia (supposedly up to 2003). With the formation of the MPR as the result of the 1999 Election, the General Assembly of the MPR was held to elect the President and Vice President. From the election, K.H. Abdurrahman Wachid was elected as President of the Republic of Indonesia and Megawati Soekarnoputri as Vice President.

Behind the election of the President and Vice President, there was an unavoidable change in political discourse and power. The dynamics of the political movement was marked by the emergence of political parties in the Reformation era. 48 political parties were registered. In the previous era commonly referred to as the New Order era, only three political parties were recorded, namely the United Development Party (PPP), the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), and the Golkar Group. The political reality in the drama was presented through the presence of three main parties, namely the Srikandi Party, the Lesmono Party, and the Bagong Group.

Political reality in 1999 as the winner of the election was PDIP (won 35,689,073 votes) with 153 seats in the DPR. Golkar (23,741,758) with 120 seats, and PKB (13,336,982) with 51 seats. PPP (11,329,905) received 58 seats, PAN (7,528,956) with 34 seats. The political constellation, stylized in the drama, won the Srikandi Party and the Bagong Group, while the Lesmono Party lost and had to surrender power to the elected party. Lasmono, as king of Amarta, must step down from the throne.

In its development in the drama, there was a polemic because even though the Srikandi Party was the winner of the election, because the party was led by a woman, a discourse emerged so that the kingdom would not be led by a woman. The political polemic based on religious issues narrowed to the choice of the winning party in the second place, namely the Bagong Group. The political lobby succeeded in lifting Bagong to become king of Amarta, replacing Lesmono who was defeated in gaining sympathy from the people. Bagong in this drama was chosen by the Srikandi Party and the Bagong Group to become king in Amarta. This Punakawan was first chosen as an alternative figure because the people could not accept the rule of women; second, Bagong holds the talisman, and he is legally entitled to assume the position of King Amarta.

Bagong 3: Sir, we have negotiated with another party. All agreed not to be ruled by Srikandi. They are still tired of being ruled by women.

Bagong 2: ... Master, you are a strong candidate to replace Lesmono. If number one falls, then number two, that's Mr., automatically replacing. Especially with Kalimusada's talisman is in the hands of Tuan, all practical requirements have been completed. The door of the Amartapura palace was wide open for you. And please take it his throne. (p.96)

From that situation, it was illustrated that the issue of the national leadership succession in the kingdom of Amarta referred to the political events in the Indonesian MPR in 1999. Bagong's election as king could be interpreted as the dynamics that occurred at the 1999 MPR General Session. PDI-P as the winning party, but it could not propose Megawati as a presidential candidate because there was resistance from religious-based parties regarding female leaders. The middle way of the situation is the MPR chose K.H. Abdurrahman Wachid (PKB) as President and Megawati later became Vice President. They replaced B.J. Habibie.

The democratic system in the kingdom of Amarta in the process of succession showed anomalies in the structure of the kingdom itself, because the king's power was absolute and passed down through generations in the circle of royal family descendents. The adaptation of the democratic model in the royal structure in this drama is one of N. Riantiaro's free interpretations of wayang stories based on the royal system. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of power does not only seem to be based on a democratic system (and election), but also still uses the tools of legitimacy of power in the wayang world, namely the Kalimusada Talisman. This amulet is a marker for anyone who holds the right and legitimately to be King Amarta. Under normal circumstances, this talisman is held by Prabu Yudhistira (eldest Pandava).

The drama "Republik Bagong" ended with a long monologue of Bagong who felt overwhelmed taking care of Amarta without the support from various parties. Bagong's monologue is a statement that remains open to any interpretation. This shows that the coalition of electoral parties is only concerned with their own interests. Meanwhile, Lesmono and Sengkuni still tried to overshadow Bagong's power with terror, intimidation, diplomacy and provocation so that Bagong's government was unstable. In the reality of state life in Indonesia, political instability during K.H. Abdurrahman Wachid's reign occurred through various political events, such as Gus Dur's dissolution of the House of Representatives regarding the issue of Bulog funds, the dismissal of several ministers from the cabinet because they were deemed not in line with the president's policy, the MPR Special Session was held which later sent down K.H. Abdurrahman Wachid from the presidency and was replaced by Megawati Soekarnoputri since July 24, 2001.

C. Ruling in the Republic of Togog

The drama "Republik Togog", which was written and staged in 2004, according to the author was inspired by the work of Moliere (Tartuffe) and the work of Viyasa in one particular episode of Sadewa in the epic Mahabharata. The election of Tejamantri a.k.a. Togog in this drama is an attempt by N. Riantiaro to present the figure of Punakawan at the Semar level. Togog's characterization is identical to the character Tartuffe in Moliere's drama who displays a hypocritical attitude through his religiosity.

In shadow puppet, Togog is considered as a god. Semar, Bilung and Betara Guru are his brothers because all of them are from one egg. Togog (Betara Antaga) came from the outer shell of the egg, Bilung (Betara Sarawita) came from the membranous skin, Semar (Betara Ismaya) came from the egg white, and Betara Guru (Betara Manikmaya) came from the egg yolk. Togog, Bilung, and Semar were then given the task of being bodyguards, whispers, and advisers to the knights in Marcada while Betara Guru became the ruler of Jonggring Salaka, the place where the gods lived. Togog had the duty to serve the non-Pandava knights who represent bad characters, Semar (with his children) serves the Pandava knights who represent good characters.

In this drama, Togog known as Tejamantri (servant of Raja Gilingwesi) acts as a "wise man" aka rishi who worked with Kalika (Betari Permoni's personal assistant) to deceive Samiaji. Kalika entered into Samiaji's body, so many decisions and attitudes of Samiaji were loaded with Kalika's interests. Their aim was to control Amarta and disturb the peace of the kingdom. They also managed to master the mind of Kunti, the mother of the Punakawan. That is, the power of Tejamantri occupies a position in the power elite that is difficult to refute. His influence on Samiaji and Kunti (mother of the Punakawan) was built through a religious base in his position as a receipt.

The goal of Tejamantri (and Kalika) is to accumulate wealth by controlling King Amarta and also other Punakawan. This is different from the Betari Permoni's agenda which aims to get her beauty back at the expense of Sadewa as a sacrifice.

Their strategy is to influence Samiaji's mind through Kalika's actions that enter Samiaji's body. Thus, the ideas put forward by Samiaji come from Kalika that has the potential to disrupt the peace of life in Amartapura. The role of Tejamantri that acts as a

receipt is to smooth out the ideas realized. Their idea was that Tejamantri first controlled Amarta by making herself the crown prince and trying to have Kalimusada talismans; the second married to Roro Parwita (his son Samiaji and Drupadi); and the third return the beauty of Betari Permoni by sacrificing Sadewa as a sacrifice. The three plans became an important point in the development of this drama story.

The three ideas were realized through the construction of power relations between Samiaji (and Kunti) with other Punakawan (Bima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sadewa) so as not to allow any open conflict. The king's command and respect for mothers are two powerful things to master the minds of other Punakawan. Tejamantri who is positioning himself as a victim raises empathy from Samiaji and Kunti, even though in Tejamantri's words there is actually an irony about the truth and honesty of his attitude, as in the following quote.

Tejamantri: Right, my lord. I am indeed a curse full of deception. The most cunning blight in the world. My life is full of moral depravity. What I did was only sin and evil ... Whatever Raden Gatotkaca alleged, I did not have the guts to deny it. Everything is correct. Believe his report ... Your Majesty, drive me out of the palace of Amarta as a mischievous criminal ... (p. 179).

However, Samiaji's response actually defended Tejamantri and considered Gatotkaca had given a false report. The irony found in the dialogue becomes a strategy to secure the position of the Tejamantri who are threatened with uncovering. His recognition as a cunning, evil, and sinful person contradicts his role as holy and religious receipt.

The crisis escalated and the means to get out of the problems faced by Amarta could be carried out by Semar or Krishna. However, the two figures are positioned by N. Riantarno outside the situation. Semar (and his children) were meditating and withdrawing from state affairs; Krishna as the great advisor did not care because he saw that the knights no longer served the people.

Such situation that was not conducive in the Amarta court environment raised Drupadi's concern (with Limbuk). They tried to overcome and cleared up the mess. Drupadi tried to open the eyes of Samiaji, her husband, that she had been influenced by Tejamantri. Drupadi's decision to overcome the chaos opened hopes for the birth of a fundamental change in Amarta. He wanted to restore the authority of the Punakawan as knights after removing intruders and those who disturbed peace.

The Tejamantri figure in the presence of the Punakawan as a priest who showed his disinterest in worldly affairs, but prioritized behavior as a priest. His advice to Samiaji about spiritual life was very much in the heart of King Amarta. However, behind the words and attitude of the receipt, Tejamantri with Bilung gathered wealth and enjoyed the royal facilities to the maximum extent possible.

Tejamantri: Bilung, where is your note? Try to count, how much property we own.

Bilung: Patience, for a moment. (issue a notebook) Record of assets of PT. Bilung Togog. Last month, tribute from Amarta traders, his five laksa pieces of gold. Half laksa entered the state treasury, The rest becomes ours ... (p. 131)

Meanwhile, in the presence of Samiaji, Tejamantri's attitude showed that he was a humble person who was not concerned with property, as shown in the following quotation.

Tejamantri: Not for wages, I serve the King. But, for the sake of a soul call. Struggle. I don't need a home, because I can sleep on. Anything. I don't need a horse carriage, because I still have feet. I also don't need to be paid, because salary only makes people calculate actions based on rewards. I still refuse. (p. 125)

Meanwhile, in the view of Kunti, Tejamantri was a pious priest, so he also appreciated his expression "Rishi Tejamantri saint. He oversees what must be watched ... He intends to guide you to the road to the city. You should be obedient and love your receipt." (P. 118). However, a different perspective came from Limbuk's figure. The figure of Limbuk was present to respond and be of opposition to the figures of Tejamantri and Bilung. Limbuk became a mainstay figure with the function of guarding the fortress of sanity. Limbuk's critical attitude towards Tejamantri appears in the following conversation.

Limbuk: Right. Who is Tejamantri? Where does it come from? He is just a tramp

Prabu Samiaji was picked up from the sewer. Remember when you first arrived? Purse blank. Shoes don't have. The clothes are full of patches. And the smell

beg for mercy ... Now his wealth is doubled, he admits as a grant from the king. He even dared to denounce many cases, compete represent the king and claim to have the means to measure human sins. What is he more powerful than the gods? (p. 118)

Limbuk's character in the drama is in line with that in in the puppet world. She always says things as they are, honest and realistic. This character is in contrast to Togog or Tejamantri figures.

Tejamantri (and Bilung)'s cunning, hypocrisy and greed were exposed after Drupadi trapped them when they were in the room. Tejamantri did not waste the opportunity and seduced Drupadi to be willing to sleep with him. All of Tejamantri's seduction was heard by Samiaji who was hiding in the room to hear and witness firsthand how and who exactly Tejamantri was.

Tejamantri's hypocritical behavior (adopted from Tartuffe) also made seductions to Drupadi, Samiaji's wife. In that case, Tejamantri could not hold his heart and lust to see the beauty of Drupadi. The deceitful character of the Tejamantri that is seen by Drupadi and the character factor that is used as a weapon to restore Samiaji consciousness from the influence of Tejamantri. The strategy of Tejamantri (and Kalika) was rewarded with Drupadi's strategy.

This drama was completed with a number of tactics that were also carried out by Dewa Penyarikan when he wanted to take the Kalimusada Talisman from the hands of Tejamantri. When the talisman was released from Tejamantri's body, the God of Destiny was immediately given to Samiaji. Semar and his children returned to Amarta and Semar also asked Togog to be more self-aware.

D. Gold Change in "Republik Petruk"

The story in this drama begins with the Kalimusada Talisman which was successfully controlled by Mustakaweni by disguising himself as Gatotkaca. No one could take the talisman from Mustakaweni's hand, until there was a knight named Priambada who was looking for his father (Arjuna). Mustakaweni then fell in love with Priambada and the talisman could be captured. Then the talisman was deposited with Petruk who later took advantage of the talisman in his hand. He also became king of Lojitengara thanks to the incitement of two gods (Kaladurgi and Kanekaratena) and entitled as King Belgeduwelbeh Tongtongsot.

With his power Petruk reformed the order of life in the country radically. Anything is permitted, so all the practice of corruption, nepotism, and abuse of bureaucracy were widespread. At the elite level, the king and royal officials lived and spree and entertained themselves excessively. In such conditions, Semar and Kresna tried to break the commendable behavior. The war broke out. At the end, King Belgeduwelbeh lost the war and it was revealed that he was Petruk who had been sought by Semar. This drama directs the reader (and the audience) to reflect if a country is governed by a leader who does not have a clear concept and work program in the state and nation. "Republik Petruk" was written and staged in 2014, and inspired by Petruk's story of being the king of wayang kulit performances, which is a story of ordinary people who have the opportunity to become leaders. Petruk's identity as a commoner is represented in this drama.

Petruk: I can't, I'm just a small person, a poor person, a maid.
How could I be able to seize the throne of the king? Crazy dreaming, Om. (p. 259)

However, Betara Guru and Narada tried Petruk when he was entrusted with the Kalimusada amulet. Petruk did not have the temptation and he became king. When it became the king, this drama revealed how *adigang* character (arrogant, self-exalted) *adigung* (highly values rank or position), and *adiguna* (highly values intelligence or reason) in humans. The character of the *adigung* that portrays arrogance is seen through Petruk's conversation. "Determination, strong hope, right goal, usually a miracle. After the victory, I took Dinda Ambarwati to Girisarangan. And, Resi Parikenan is pleased to inaugurate our wedding " The intermediate character is seen in the following Petruk conversation.

"Well, that's how it is. Every day is busy. This meeting. A lot of business. Such a big country, so many sources of wealth that still cannot be realized. For example, the wealth of the earth must be dug But why bother? Sell out, it's OK. Don't make a headache, that's why all day long my time has been spent attending many meetings with various merchant associations ... "(p. 288)

From the quote, it can be seen how Petruk was very busy because of his position which required him to make important decisions related to the country's wealth under his control. In the context of *adiguna* which describes intelligence or reason, it can be seen in Petruk's idea that shows a strategy to gain profit without the need to work hard, as in the following quote

"Look. The wealth of our country that has not yet been seen, once sold, is visible, because there is money? Yes, right. And that is the wealth of our country too? Without leaving money for production costs, without bothering to build human resources, without the hassle of arranging the market. Like, our hands are clean, but can be big money. Remember! That's wealth too. "(P.288)

These three attitudes are manifested in Petruk's character in Prabu Belgeduwelbeh Tongtongsot's vision, which in general shows his inability to lead, but he feels capable and able to do anything because he has power. The character of Petruk is considered right in the position of king because he is a character who shows carelessness, speaks arbitrarily, and likes to joke (humorous).

E. Choosing a Maharaja in the "Cangik Republic"

Prabu Basudewa, king of Suranesia (Old Mandura) just died. The leadership of Suranesia was temporarily run by Cangik, the loyal servant of the king. Cangik did not want to be a ruler for a long time, so the urgent thing at that time was to find a replacement for Prabu Basudewa. His three children, namely Sumbadra, Kresna, and Baladewa did not want to replace his father in Suranesia. For this reason it was necessary to elect a new king. Cangik invited jurors who would select Suranesia's ruling

candidates. The judges were Betara Narada, Betari Permoni, Semar, Lesmono Mondrokumoro, and Riri Ratri (daughter of the crown of King Kediri).

The six candidates included Graitto Bakari (businessman), Burama Rama (singer), Dundung Bikung (once a defense commander), Bimbang Yugama (a duke), Santunu Guru (soldiers who are also entrepreneurs), and Jaka Wisesa (young people who want to be in power and get support from Cangik). The Suranesia emperor candidates all came from the future world that appeared in the present. The presentation process of each candidate's work plan was held. But in the middle of the process, Baladewa came and expelled all the candidates on the grounds that their manners were wrong and he did not want his kingdom to be a gathering place for future people. Suranesia needs better humans.

This drama shows the allegory of the presidential candidates who came to the surface, both as candidates who have been recorded in general elections in Indonesia and politicians who become candidates. From the inherent profession of the Suranesia, king candidates in this drama can be juxtaposed with the profession of politicians or presidential candidates. Graitto Bakari figure can be interpreted as Aburizal Bakrie, Burama-rama refers to dangdut singer H. Rhoma Irama, Dundung Bikung can be interpreted as General Wiranto, Bimbang Yugama intended as Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono who had served as Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security, then Santunu Guru was Prabowo Subiyanto who used to be a military officer as well as a businessman, and Jaka Wisesa as an allegory from Joko Widodo (a young man supported by a party's chairwoman).

The political constellation ahead of the 2004 presidential elections and the 2014 presidential election was used as the basis for the issues expressed in this "Cangik Republik" drama. The Cangik figure itself can be interpreted in all positions. He can represent the figure of Megawati Soekarnoputri, but also he is used as the mouthpiece of a democratic and reformist ruler. It was seen through his idea of the determination of a jury to elect Suranesia king candidates, secondly he did not intend to rule without strong legitimacy from the people. He held the position of ruler of Suranesia because he got a job in the midst of a situation of absence of kings. In that case, this figure is identical to the position received by B.J. Habibie was the holder of the national leadership after Soeharto resigned on May 21, 1998. Gareng explicitly revealed who and how national leaders from the beginning to the latest would unfold.

This drama is full of satirical humor about potential leaders who are competing to occupy power. In addition, their lives, cases and character are expressed as a measure that is considered inappropriate for that era. The candidates came from the future which according to Baladewa's view was "a bit wrong" and Suranesia "needed better people."

F. Power Relations in "Semar Gugat"

The fifth drama discussed in this article is "Semar Gugat" written and staged in 2016. This story reveals the fulfillment of promises and acts of humiliation. Srikandi and Arjuna will get married, one of Srikandi's requests to Arjuna is to cut Semar's leg in front of the invitation. The request was made by Arjuna and Semar left the Punakawan. The event was masterminded by Betari Permoni who entered Srikandi's body. The Punakawan felt guilty and tried to apologize to Semar. However, efforts in that direction were not easy to do because of Permoni factors. Semar also sued the gods for Permoni's treatment of him.

This drama presents a moral suit for actions and improper treatment by Arjuna (and Srikandi) against Semar. Morally, Semar is a god who manifests to accompany the knights in Marcada. This noble task places Semar in a respected position, a place to ask, and a wise guardian. Such a position and role is what is to be overturned through a request by Srikandi as her marriage gift with Arjuna. Srikandi asked Arjuna (her future husband) to cut Semar's head in front of the invitees. The request was carried out and the result was a sense of humiliation, anger, and disappointment from Semar. He has been humiliated, demeaned, and played with. Semar's feelings was brought before the gods with one question, "How could there be any omission to Permoni's treatment?"

Semar's attempted to sue the gods so that he could restore his pride. The trick is to ask the body to go return to normal back when he was still a god. Betara Guru also granted and immediately changed Semar's physicality, and he was named as Prabu Sanggadonya Lukanurani who ruled in the Simpang Bawana Nuranitis Asri kingdom. Petruk and Gareng became royal officials helping Semar. Only his wife, Dewi Sutiragen, did not want to be in the kingdom. He chose to wait in his village to wait for Semar to go home.

This drama reveals about changing from one person to another. Changes in the physical identity of the figure of Semar (who is known as a potbellied, has topknot and supernatural powers in the form of a fart) to the figure of Prabu Sanggadonya Lukanurani (who is dashing, handsome, and knight) shows that physical orientation is a prevalence in wayang stories, both in the Mahabharata epics and Ramayana. Switching shapes is also always done by the gods. On the other hand, the phenomenon of transfiguration does not affect the character of Sutiragen, Semar's wife. The character's view underscores the authenticity of Semar's identity and character. In that case, Semar's character is not in Prabu Sanggadonya Lukanurani's character, and vice versa. Dewi Sutiragen did not recognize her personal identity even though she knew who the king really was. He waited for the person he knew as a husband and father of children, namely Semar.

G. Punakawan Revitalization

The concept of traditional clowning in wayang (kulit and golek) shows refers to their respective characters which are unique to each other, but constitute a unified whole. As a unified whole, clerics are servants, accompanists, reminders, and guardians of morality and common sense. Specifically, each Punakawan character represents their respective values and characters. The important Semar character is patient and wise so that he is always able to solve various problems thoroughly and remind all

parties to remain alert. Gareng has the character of a person who is always careful, both in saying and acting. Petruk has a cheerful character so he likes to be humorous, generous, and happy to talk. Bagong has the character of being skeptical and questioning everything so that it impresses presumptuously but he is honest. Meanwhile, Togog has a stubborn character, willing to win by himself, authoritarian, and hypocritical. Bilung characters with authoritarian, greedy and arrogant character. Both become inseparable lovebirds. Cangik has the character of a loyal mother, thinking carefully, and humorously. Cangik has a child named Limbuk who has a patient and critical character, and a daughter who still needs advice from her mother.

From the various characters of the clowns, we can see how the main function of the clowns in a story. They occupy functions as servants, caregivers, and entertainers. These functions are integral to their facial features, dress, physical condition, and voice. All of this shows a visual and auditive cultural identity (Weedon 2004: 7). In N. Riantiarno's perspective, the characters of the clerics were processed in such a way in each drama by giving certain articulations to suit the contextual situations and conditions that became its critical discourse. In that context, the clerics were stylized and revitalized to carry out contemporary discourses that were widely known by the people of their time. The discourse is a collective memory that nests in the minds of the public in line with various social, political and cultural events that develop. Punakawan with all its attributes, both in the form of external signs that are attached to the body and the way of thinking, is a cultural treasure that stores local wisdom that is rooted in the culture of its supporting community. They on the one hand are liquid cultural instruments, but on the other hand they represent authentic human characters. Even his religious identity as seen in the Tejamantri figure. The religious identity is seen through clothing, the language used, and the hairstyle (Weedon, 2004: 7).

The presence of the clowns in the five literatures of the drama, shows that the performers remain relevant in this life. Its function remains the same, namely reminding and criticizing through humor so that it is still able to entertain and advise. The five plays are packaged using the concept of spectacular extravaganza and comedy drama with music, song, dance, and romanticism. The extravaganza theater performance was shown by Teater Koma as the embodiment of the basic function of art according to Horace, namely *dulce et utile* (fun and useful). The audience gets pleasure in the form of entertainment while exploring collective memories of various social, political, economic, environmental and cultural conditions that have been or are being experienced by the audience. In that context, N. Riantiarno consciously builds the cultural industry creatively, especially producing the image of a clown who identifies tradition to the stage of contemporary culture to become a modern-day characterist. Creativity can be interpreted as the way the mind creates and transforms various information into various concepts that combine with each other and generate new ideas (Power, 2004: 78).

The shows that N. Riantiarno has worked on with this “republic” series since the first manuscript (2001) to the fifth manuscript (2016) demonstrate the dynamics of the Indonesian nation’s journey in the reformation era which is full of events that need to be contemplated. In a span of fifteen years, N. Riantiarno has documented human characters from the eyes of the Punakawan leaders. The process of transferring the vehicle of Punakawan characters from the puppet literature to the modern theater through the five dramas shows revitalized local wisdom without changing their character radically. N. Riantiarno’s appreciation of the character of the clowns has resulted in an exploration of literary and theater art that is comfortable to enjoy. Readers (as well as spectators) remain familiar with the novelty of Punakawan in Teater Koma performances because their culture has not changed (Kayam, 1981: 24). That shows that the clowns are still as a reliable cultural media to express criticism while those who are criticized will not feel offended. Instead they are trained to laugh at themselves.

III. CONCLUSION

The clowns as an integral part of the puppet shows occupy important positions and functions. Their position is not a knight who is brave and handsome but physically portrays physical disfigurement and disability. However, behind these deficiencies there are human characters, both positive and negative. Their main function is to give awareness to the audience or readers of the basic characters of humans, and give concrete examples of behavior. They are prominent figures of universal values as well as the values of local wisdom in the form of cultural values.

Through the five literary plays by N. Rantiarno, the richness of traditional culture is brought to the surface with a new face. The Punakawan are presented in a revitalization of local culture on the stage of modern society. Their presence is used as a moral guard in the midst of the social and political dynamics and discourse that developed in post-reformation Indonesia in 1998.

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