

Character Education of Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran

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Abstract— *This research aimed to find out how are the character education values in Surakarta-style gunungan gapuran viewed from: 1) its shape, 2) its ornament, and 3) its relevance to the present and the future life? Theoretical foundation discussed: value, character education, puppet and gunungan. This study was a qualitative research with descriptive method. Techniques of collecting data used were library study, interview, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification stages. Character education in Surakarta-style gunungan gapuran viewed from: (1) shape aspect contained, among others, truth, affection, oath and promise, sacrifice, obligation, appreciating each other, bravery, ethics, social norm, and alertness, (2) ornament aspect contained, among others, faith, piety, smartness, reasoning, justice, and loyalty, and (2) its relevance was that human beings should be aware of the origin of life and the ultimate goal of life thereby achieving harmonious life within society.*

Keywords—*Education Value, Character, Gunungan*

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

One of Javanese cultures needing to be preserved is *wayang* (puppet). *Wayang* is the main identity of Javanese people. *Wayang* is an important element of Javanese culture, as a compelling religious mythology, unifying Javanese people comprehensively.

Wayang kulit performance is often considered as symbolic language of more spiritual than physical life. For that reason, to *Pedalangan* Art lovers and performers, *wayang kulit* can be used as guideline for attitude and deed of certain community. Those conceptions are implied in *wayang* performance. It is a perspective on the essence, origin and objective of life, the relationship between human being and his/her God, the relationship between human beings, and that between human being and nature. Therefore, *wayang kulit* performance is a source of values when its presentation can reveal the content artistically. The values contained in *wayang* performance is the essential value in human life hopefully can be absorbed and implemented in living within society, nation, and state.

One part of *Wayang* is *Gunungan* or *Kayon* (mountain-like figure in the wayang play symbolizing the universe). *Gunungan* or *Kayon* is a mountain-like figure with ornament containing various meanings. *Kayon* is used to open and to close the puppetry story; thus *kayon* is considered as very essential. *Wayang kulit* art containing noble character tenet and history values has now shifted and been abandoned by people. *Wayang kulit* performance is watched and listened to by certain class of society only, and even in upper-middle class of society, the respond to *wayang* is getting more limited. Considering this phenomenon, the author is interested in studying “*Noble Character Education in Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran*”.

B. Problem Statement

Considering the elaboration above, the problem of research can be stated as follows:

1. What are character education values contained in Surakarta-style Gunungan gapuran, viewed from its shape aspect?
2. What are character education values contained in Surakarta-style Gunungan gapuran, viewed from its ornament aspect?
3. What is the relevance of character education values contained in Surakarta-style Gunungan gapuran to the society today?
- 4.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory employed in this research concerned the concepts of value, character education, Javanese culture, *wayang* (puppet), values contained in puppet, the role of wayang, gunungan, and the shape of gunungan.

III. METHOD

This study was a qualitative research using descriptive method. Primary data was transcript of interview result and documentation. Secondary data was a book entitled *Gunungan nilai-nilai filsafat Jawa* (*Gunungan* as Javanese philosophical values). Primary data source in this study was informant constituting a puppeteer (*dalang*) coming from Jatisrono of Wonogiri Regency. Techniques of collecting data used were interview, documentation, and library study. Data validation was carried out using data triangulation technique. Data analysis started with data collection, was followed with data reduction and data display, and then ended with conclusion drawing.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Character Education Values in Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran viewed from its shape aspect

The shape of *gunungan* or *kayon* includes pointed upper part creating pointed angle, while the lower part widens just like a pyramid. The pointed angle is the peak of life objective, the genuine truth or God. Everyone has different perceptions on such the genuine truth, but eventually only one goal will be achieved. In the shape of Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran, there are many noble character education values:

1. **Satya**: truth, meaning that the objective to be achieved should be believed as actually true.
2. **Santi**: affection, meaning that to achieve the end objective of human life, an individual should have affection or love. Only with love, envy, spite, hate, and etc can be evaded.
3. **Dharma**: oath, promise, sacrifice, obligation, good deed. Love or *santi* needs sacrifice in the form of good deed and loyalty to hold on the oath and promise tightly.
4. **Prima**: principal, prioritizing. With love and willingness, *dharma* implementation can start with altruism rather than egoism.
5. **Ahimsa**: taking care of and appreciating each other in human life and taking care of others' human rights.
6. **Sudira**: meaning bravery, in living within society difficulty and trouble can be found that will inhibit an individual's life development. To deal with any life problems, bravery and persistence as well as science (utilities) are required.
7. **Susila** meaning holding on or referring to ethics, moral, religion, and social norms prevailing in interacting with others.
8. **Anuraga** meaning *anuting raga*. Human being is a weak creature and his body is made of earth, fire, water, and wind elements that eventually will go back to basic. It is different from the everlasting soul or spirit. Therefore, any deed and say should be maintained and human beings should have intellectuality, rely on physical power, and rely on physical and spiritual abilities to defeat others.
9. **Sambegana** meaning alertness. In living within society, everyone should have certain responsibility and obligation according to his field. Therefore, in undertaking his responsibility and duty, he should be able to measure his strength, be aware of unexpected risk coming, and know the difficulty the others encounter. This alertness includes physical and mental ones.

B. Character Education Values in Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran viewed from its ornament aspect

1. Faithful

Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran contains noble character education of faithful as represented in figure of tree. Tree in Surakarta-Style Gunungan Gapuran serves as the symbol of *pancer urip* (life center), *witing urip* (life tree), *witing sangkan paran* (source of life objective). A lyric or *suluk* read by narrator (*dalang*) when *kayon* is embedded uprightly into the center of *pakeliran* as the sign of the change from *pathet enem* into *pathet sanga* or around *gara-gara* (joking) act. The content of lyric is as follows:

*Kayune purwa sejati,
Pangira jagad godhong kinarya rumembe, adrapa kekuwung,
Kembang lintang salaga langit, who surya lan tensu,
Kasirat gung lan pujan,
Puncak angkasa bengkah pratiwi, oyote bayu bajra.*

Meaning:

3. The true beginning tree,
Branch is the world and leaves equip it,
4. Enclosed with bright light,
Blossoming with the stars on the sky
Bearing sun and moon as its fruits, seeming to be exalted by creation,
Having sky as its top and earth as its base, and wind as its root.

The lyric means that the creator as the source of everything is supposed to be principal tree, with universe being its branch and leaves. Stars, sun, and moon on the sky illuminating the world is supposed to be flower and fruit spreading out the universe. The tree is so high that is represented as the infinite peak of sky, while earth is the base of tree, and wind is its root. The content of lyric reflects on unity in diversity, meaning that the existence of Creator is inseparable from His created fruit, becoming the spirit

of universe. Conceiving beauty, maintaining and appreciating this great universe means conceiving the presence of The Creator. So, human beings in this world are required to take care of, conceive and appreciate His creation as the form of human's faith to God as the creator of universe.

2. Pious

Noble character education value of pious in Surakarta-style *gunungan gapuran* is represented in figure of Makara. One-eyed makara is interpreted as the symbol of *Batara Surya* or Solar Deity authorized to illuminate the world. Human beings are unhappy and miserable in their life due to their dark hearth, and then they attempt to find the light with their mind and character. The only source of everlasting light that can illuminate the human's dark hearth is The Creator (God), the source of life, the source of any incidences. The everlasting bright light from God always illuminates human life just like the sun shines incessantly. Therefore, human beings, with their mind and character, find out that everlasting brightness is the source of life, so that human beings obligatorily worship Him.

Javanese people believe that human's perishable and imperfect life in the world is essentially misery. Human life unhappiness is due to separation from the source of life. To acquire happiness, human beings attempt to find way to get united with God. The existence of God should be known since now, since they are still alive, to prevent them from being lost in their journey to go back to Him. The ways taken to find out His existence are: meditation, asceticism by withdrawing from world crowd and controlling passion. The peak of spiritual exploration by means of meditation ends with a condition called *manunggaling kawula gusti* (the unification of human beings and God).

Life perfection intended to find supernatural power, fame, and power will be eventually misleading and lead their life to be miserable. It is regrettable when the meditation is not done sincerely and not intended to God. World enjoyment is a quasi one and following the flaming secular passion is a wrong and misled behavior. Nothing is everlasting in the world and everything changes any time. Cultivating passion is an evil that will entrap human beings in the depth of misery. On the contrary, when all deeds and kindnesses are done sincerely and for lofty purpose, life perfection will be achieved.

3. Smart

Surakarta-style *Gunungan Gapuran* contains noble character education value of smart. Smart character is very important to undertake life with clear objective to get well-established life. Any action builds on wise thinking and feeling consideration, not limited to a shallow unilateral consideration, but viewing problem from many point of view and then trying to take the best solution to their life problem.

Smart education value in *wayang gunungan* is symbolized with figure of monkey. Monkey is the smartest and agilest animal like human being. Monkey is the cleverest animal compared with other animals. In the story of Ramayana, monkey has the most excellent place. They become followers/soldiers of Sri Rama, a king constituting the reincarnation of Hyang Wisnu the God of Justice and Truth to liberate Sinta from Rahwana's grip.

4. Reasoning

Reasoning is accepting a truth logically. Anything out of reasoning, invisible, and mysterious cannot be accepted as the truth. Any *action* builds on rational thinking and uses feeling consideration. In Surakarta-style *Gunungan Gapuran*, reasoning character is symbolized with *Lar-laran*.

Lar-laran is the figure of a pair of wings of giant located in the right and left of Surakarta-style *Gunungan Gapuran*. *Lar-laran* as *tatwa* means that human life is affected by environment. *Lar-laran* is the composition of snake head, and snake symbolizes human passion affected by environment as well. It has been clear that environment can affect human attitude and behavior.

Wujud kaja lar suwiwining manuk kang lagi megar, iku anggambarake wudjuding thethukulan bangsaning pandan kang thukul katon seger ana sakupenging blumbang iku mau. (R. M. Sajid in Purwoko Agus, 2013:86). It means that the bird wing-like shape spreading out represents pandanus plant apparently flourishing around the pond. Human beings can screen kindness in the effect of bad environment, thereby will create concord. It is just like pandanus with its fragrance flourishing beautifully in the edge of pond.

5. Just

Just or fair means putting an affair or matter according to its place. Just or fair means that the one is impartial to certain party. Regarding right and obligation, the word *just* means treating right and holding on the truth tightly. In Islam religion tenet, treating everyone justly becomes something high recommended and even obliged.

Justice can be included in to aspect of interacting with everyone, others and the self. Being just is one of characters honored in Islam and this character will not be affected by such factors as class, relative, friend, affection and family.

Being just in Surakarta-style *gunungan gapuran* is symbolized with figure of tiger and wild ox facing each other. The strong tiger called the king of jungle symbolizes the power. Wild ox is used to symbolize justice, as it is strong, brave and persistent. The figure of tiger and wild ox facing each other represents that power should often face justice. Arbitrary power tends to ignore justice, and justice should be enforced bravely like a wild ox fighting for its life resisting the tiger that will prey it.

6. Loyal

Being loyal means holding on promise and stance tightly, complying with and being obedient regardless the heavy duty to undertake.

Being loyal in *wayang gunung* is represented by two twin giants safeguarding the *gapuran* gate, *Gupala* and *Dwarpala*, who undertake the mandate to safeguard the gate loyally. The twin giants safeguarding the gate in *wayang gunung* are generally represented as holding *gada* or *blade* and shield. *Gada* or *blade* symbolizes power/mandate.

C. The relevance of Character Education Value in Surakarta-Style Gunung Gapuran

Character education value contained in Surakarta-style *gunungan gapuran* implies that human beings should keep conserving the nature, establishing good relation between human beings, and always close to the One and Only God. Thus, human life will be more peaceful and composed. And hopefully they will get the nicest place beside Him later.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusions of research on Character Education contained in Surakarta-style Gunung Gapuran are as follows:

1. Viewed from its shape, character education values contained in Surakarta-style *gunungan gapuran* are: a) *Satya* meaning the truth; b) *Santi* meaning affection; c) *Dharma* meaning holding on the promise; d) *Prima* meaning appreciating others; e) *Sudira* meaning bravery; f) *Ahimsa* meaning appreciating others' work; g) *Susila* is self-control; h) *Anugara* is humility; and i) *Sambegana* meaning alertness.
2. Viewed from its ornament, Surakarta-style *gunungan gapuran* contains character values including, among others: a) faith, b) piety, c) smartness, d) reasoning, e) just or fair, and f) loyalty.
3. Noble character education contained in Surakarta-style Gunung Gapuran is still to be relevant to the present and the future lives, viewed from both its shape and ornament aspects

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