



## Community identity politics of Brijo Lor society, Klaten in Ki Ageng Glego myth through Reog performance

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### Abstract

This research is aimed to describe community identity politics of Brijo Lor society, Klaten in Ki Ageng Glego myth through *Reog* performance. The research questions are how is the community identity politics in Brijo Lor society, and what is the relationship between the identity politics with Ki Ageng Glego myth through *Reog* performance? The research approach used is qualitative. Data collecting technique was obtained by these ways: observation, documentation, literature, and interview. Data analysis was conducted by: data collection, data reduction, data diagnose, and conclusion. To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher conducted triangulation. The result of this research proposed that community identity politics in Brijo Lor society in preserving *Reog* is a strategy to maintain traditional art for many other traditional arts are extinct. *Reog* performance conducted regularly is a mediation of the society who *ngalap berkah* (beg for blessing) to Ki Ageng Glego spirit. When *Reog* is performed, Ki Ageng Glego spirit descends upon the world. Many people come to watch *Reog* because they want to get blessing for the descend of Ki Ageng Glego spirit. Ki Ageng Glego myth became an identity political way of Brijo Lor society through *Reog* performance.

**Keywords:** identity politics; community of Brijo Lor society; *Reog*

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### INTRODUCTION

*Reog* performance is one of traditional arts that still exist in Brijo Lor village, Trucuk, Klaten. The *Reog* performance is the way people respect Ki Ageng Glego that spread Islam in Brijo Lor and its surrounding. Ki Ageng Glego was a person who was persistent and hard worker to do holy deed which was spreading Islam. Besides, *Reog* performance is also aimed to devote and be grateful to God. Human must obey and be grateful with what God

gives. Therefore, to be thankful for God's blessing, Brijo Lor society does the *Reog* performance.

Hence, *Reog* art is influenced of Ki Ageng Glego myth. People think that the story of Ki Ageng Glego is real. Besides, it is considered as a sacral story to strengthen *Reog* art in Brijo Lor sacred. Ki Ageng Glego story is considered as the principle story of *Reog* performance ritual. People of Brijo Lor also believe that Ki Ageng Glego is forefather who first inhabited Brijo Lor village. *Reog* art performance ritual to re-

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peat Ki Ageng Glego must be done because they believe by having done *Reog* performance they will live peacefully and safely avoided from any danger and sickness. A variety of cultural richness that grows in this society is known, believed and admitted as elements that can thicken a social cohesion among the people (Haba, 2007).

*Reog* performance is an expression to communicate with supernatural spirit. Brijor Lor people believe that *Reog* is a sacred ceremony. Therefore, the existence of *Reog* becomes sacrosanct. They think so because they believe that *Reog* can be a blessing for the society (Yeung, 2011). If it is abolished, they believe there will be no blessing comes upon them, which means it is a disaster.

The existence of *Reog* in Brijor Lor cannot be separated from the globalization influence. Everything that exists in globalization era always changes. There is also a change in *Reog*, even though the people cannot feel it. One of the changes is that the change of performance elements, such as costume, make up, dance, property, duration and the plot. This change is one of ways to maintain and preserve the existence of *Reog* in globalization era.

The *Reog* performance that occurs annually is *kuda lumping* that relates the actors with the supernatural ancestors. *Reog* performance and Ki Ageng Glego myth as an identity has attracted society of Brijor Lor and outside to come and watch this *Reog* performance and also *ngalap berkah* as well. In this globalization era, there are many traditional arts that are left by people, but *Reog* art is still socially accepted by society of Brijor Lor and outside. Besides, the power of Ki Ageng Glego myth has shaped the mindset of people in Brijor Lor to perform *Reog* in every beginning of Shawwal month.

Brijor Lor community as a collective society tries to understand the myth of Ki Ageng Glego to believe the sacred values. These values are not only applied in prohibitions, but also applied in regular and factual ceremony. The mindset of the society in Brijor Lor toward the scared myth

of Ki Ageng Glego is done by annual *Reog* performance and as a blessing prayer. The *Reog* performance is a way to shape the identity politics for Brijor Lor community toward Ki Ageng Glego myth. The identity of a community or society is really close to awareness of collectiveness (Wrahatnala, 2015). This awareness of collectiveness becomes a must for community of Brijor Lor to perform *Reog* to *ngalap berkah*.

The *Reog* performance which is the representation from many aims in community of Brijor Lor to *ngalap berkah* can be considered as a identity politics by Brijor Lor society community toward Ki Ageng Glego myth. The identity politics of society community is shaped by collective mindset. Based on those reasons, the research problems are how is identity community politics in Brojo Lor, and what is the relationship between this identity politics with Ki Ageng Glego myth through *Reog* performance?

## METHOD

This research method is qualitative method. With this method, it is expected that a variety aspects observed are valid, reliable, and relevant with the needs. The location of this research is Brijor Lor village, Kalikebo, Trucuk, Klaten, especially in Al-Fatah Mosque and its yard, and also Ki Ageng Glego cemetery. In this village, there is a community of *Reog* actors. Data collection techniques used were observation, interview, and documentation. The data collection steps were: (1) observation; that is a way that the researcher used to see a dance learning process, (2) interview; where the researcher tried to reveal how the research subjects define the dance learning process, (3) documentation; where the researcher designed and placed terminologies and theoretical sources in this research. The main instrument in this research is the researcher. The researcher involved directly in this research by going to the field, doing observation in Ki Ageng Glego's cemetery in Brijor Lor, Kalikebo, Trucuk, Klaten and also interviewing the

informants. The researcher had prepared it before, by bringing any stuffs that could help the research in the field. Those stuffs were tape recorder, and notebook. Tape recorder was used to record the interview, and notebook was used to take a note of observation in the field.

The data collected by observation, interview, and documentation were qualitative data. The techniques used to analyse the data were interpretative descriptive analysis data by these steps: (1) choosing relevant data/document and coding, (2) making an objective notes and classifying and editing (reducing) the answers as well, (3) making a reflective note, writing the ideas of the researcher as an interpretation with its relation to objective note, (4) concluding data by making a format based on data analysis technique that the researcher wanted, (5) doing triangulation, that was checking the data validity by concluding double data. The data analysis procedure was conducted by data reduction process, data presentation, and data verification with interactive analysis cycle model (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Community Identity Politics of Brijio Lor Society

In identity politics, the most important question is who are we that form themselves in cultural themes like the homogeneity of religion, language, history, value, habit and institution. In this case, there is a question occurred who are the community of the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego that still have willingness to preserve *Reog* art in Brijio Lor up to now? Horowitz (1998) used ethnic term to show a very exclusive group identity based on the homogeneity of background, member based on relatives and especially the typical of culture. It is obvious that social and situation experience, and the closeness with the cultural modernization that is determined by identity politics, are on the top position to determine the definition of cultural way of living in groups, in terms of affiliation of religi-

on-culture tradition.

In addition, to see "*Who are we?*" it is questioning who is the community of *Reog* preservation? Identity politics stated that there is a strategy to see themselves through the others. The other people here means individual, group, tribe, ethnics, race and nation with its all the differences like age, sex, history, belief, religion, politics, social and culture. The process of identity construction generally covers accentuating of essential and substantial similarities and differences with 'the Other'. Yet, it must be remembered that identity is never fixed, static, or final but it is always changing and dynamic, or in constant mutation (During, 2005). According to Hall (1997) identity construction is never complete and this process is happening inside, not outside, representative. This *Reog* performance is one of representatives therefore, it is an interesting media to observe how the community and the society offer the ideal identity of society.

Based on the identity politics concept and *Reog* performance, it is revealed that society in Brijio Lor that has *Reog* performance that relates to Ki Ageng Glego myth is a means to construct identity community of society Brijio Lor. The society that comes to watch *Reog* performance and beg for Ki Ageng Glego blessing are 'the other' that becomes projection for society and community in Brijio Lor to shape the identity. Their general identity is society who comes to take a part in *ngalap berkah*. In some cases, it is revealed that multiple identities like family gathering in Brijio Lor, as merchants, bring relatives to be cured, cultural experts, students, researchers and art spectators.

The strengthening of identity politics in Ki Ageng Glego myth through *Reog* performance in Brijio Lor as well as the cultural identity movement to raise the local culture, as well as the extinction of local culture. With a loud and provocative voice in *Reog* performance in front of many people, the society of Brijio Lor said, "I am the descendant of Ki Ageng Glego" that still maintain *Reog*. The society coming to watch the *Reog*

performance also beg blessing from Ki Ageng Glego through *Reog* performance. Both society of Brijo Lor who perform in *Reog* and the other people come to watch *Reog* and visit Ki Ageng Gribig's cemetery is people who wants to ask for blessing.

Besides, because of the extinction of traditional arts in villages as the impact of globalization era, there is revitalization movement occurring to develop the traditional arts. It shows that people in village do identity political movement to show the cultural movement that leads to movement to preserve traditional arts. The improving of cultural movement as a identity political movement as well as village strengthening where its position as a developing subject is not developing object like in New Order. Besides the awareness of society about the importance of local culture that has been used as a social-culture activity pattern as well as to filter foreign culture that comes to Indonesia.

Thus, identity politics carried out by society in Brijo Lor can implement cultural movement to strengthen *Reog* performance as a step to preserve and continue from the predecessors. The identity political project is expressed in *Reog* performance every beginning of Shawwal month. Identity politics, that has been tested to be applied in cultural entity in sermon or Islam spreading by *Reog* performance. Or, by having *Reog* performance, it is expected there are more Klaten people to hold Islam by Islam sermon (Triyanto *et al.*, 2016).

According to Klinken (2007), people who take all of buildings of local political institution are the local elites. It is same as all relatives of the descendants of Ki Ageng Glelo who took all institution buildings of *Reog* cultural performance movement in Brijo Lor that is formed in a society Brijo Lor media. It is proved that, except the descendants of Ki Ageng Glelo are not allowed to come in this community. It means that identity politics is used to differentiate between us and them, to keep the purity of the descendants of Ki Ageng Glelo. It is a matter because they have gone so far to maintain the good relationship among the

descendants of Ki Ageng Glelo. They are worried if there is someone else involved with this, they just spoil the good relationship among the descendants of Ki Ageng glelo

The identity politics make the cultural awareness toward the society of Brijo Lor village to maintain the *Reog* performance. This cultural awareness make them to always have annual *Reog* performance. Besides enjoying the aesthetic art, they always keep the relationship between the community in Brijo Lor village who are the descendants of Ki Ageng Glelo. Helping each other between the community to maintain *Reog* is a way to strengthen a good relationship. They really respect social values to have a team work, maintain togetherness, and maintain the unity with the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego.

The social values that relate the togetherness is believed by the society as a cultural identity shaping. However, sometimes there are difficulties and crush with the other ideologies. It is occurred because there are members of *Reog* performance join Muhammadiyah, *Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia* (LDII), *Nahdatul Ulama* (NU) and Javanese ideology. On the other words, there are some of them joining fundamentalism group. Yet, the process in unity is done by all societies in Brijo Lor. The suggestion to maintain the togetherness is always emphasized by the predecessors. All community is bound by the togetherness as a big family of Ki Ageng Glelo, and it is expected can understand each other. They realize, that it is the risk to built cultural politics to become a process to defense and strengthen *Reog*.

The establishment of Ki Ageng Glego community cannot be separated from the construction of identity politics of elites who strive to reduce and manipulate their business to be a desire on behalf of society in Brijo Lor to re-invented their community possession right and historical possession right (the right of the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego as a Islam disseminator after the collapse of Majapahit). Start from that point, it can be concluded that thinking,

behavior, and action of community in Brijio Lor village that has been established is aimed to produce active awareness to built *Reog* art.

There are two conclusions. First, the identity constructed by elites is clearly aimed to keep and preserve the community that preserves *Reog*, also to maintain *Reog* now and in the future that becomes the identity of society, Brijio Lor village. The position of identity of group/community that preserves *Reog* becomes important as a way to unite people in this globalization era where there are many traditional arts that are going to be extinct because of the society are weakening and being marginalized. The identity of conservation community is established by responding a love element and the main symbol like in Ki Ageng Glego glory that spread Islam with *Reog* media in 18 century.

Second, the construction done by elites is a politics indication that place community of Brijio Lor village can conserve *Reog* art compared to elites in other villages where its traditional arts extinct. Besides, the community in Brijio Lor is able to show that they are equal with the other communities that still conserve traditional arts in Klaten. Therefore, community in Brijio Lor can be considered as a community that is good. Hence, identity construction in Brijio Lor is a political and cultural admission in society.

Identity is not else as a past chain in any social relations, cultural, economical in society. There is a synthesis process that lead to various past relations that made people want to be admitted of its existence, in personal or group in context place and time (Rutherford, 1990). The social life in society in Brijio Lor village that conserves *Reog* is shaped because of the social interaction with the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego, which means they have the same historical background and culture. In this case, they always choose to gather to watch *Reog* every beginning of Shawwal month. For instance, the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego that has stayed outside, like Magelang, Wonogiri, Bandung, Jakarta, or even

outside Java always go to their hometown when there is *Reog* performance.

#### **Brijio Lor village, Myth and Ngalap Berkah**

Brijio Lor village is a village that belongs to Kalikebo urban village, Trucuk sub district, Klaten regency. This village is located around 40 km in the east part of the center of Klaten. In Klaten regency, there are 50,97% (33.412 ha) land as a field, 39,29% (25.760 ha) land non-field, and 9,74% as a housing complex. (Section of Integration Cultivation and Dissemination Statistic of Klaten Regency, 2014:2), Klaten regency is divided into 26 sub districts and 391 urban villages. Brijio Lor village is known as a village that still conserves *Reog*. All *Reog* committees are the descendants of the first *Reog* inventor who is Ki Ageng Glego around the 16 centuries. Brijio Lor village belongs to the part of suburb of Javanese, that has Islam history. Ki Ageng Glego started his Islam teaching here.

In this village, there is the cemetery of Ki Ageng Glego, behind Al-Fatah mosque. In front of Ki Ageng Glego's cemetery, there are 6 smaller cemeteries that are predicted as the cemeteries of Ki Ageng Glego's students. There are always people come to visit Ki Ageng Glego's cemetery every day. Especially in Friday Kliwon night and Tuesday Kliwon night, there are always groups from Klaten or outside Klaten visit. Even, those pilgrimages come from Jakarta, Surabaya, and Denpasar. They who come are hope for many things, like praying for Ki Ageng Glego's spirit, find inspiration, get a great charisma, get a better job position, and get a peaceful life.

Ki Ageng Glego's myth becomes the spot of the attention of Brijio Lor community. When a *Reog* performance is shown in the yard of Al-Fatah mosque, there are many people come. These people ask their family members to tell about the sickness so that the sickness can be healed like before, beside, they who come to the *Reog* performance also *ngalap berkah*. They come from Kalikebo village and outside Kalikebo like Delanggu, Bayat, Klaten, Solo, Wonogiri, and so on. There are also peop-

le who come directly to Ki Ageng Glego's cemetery to pray. Before it, the caretaker of the cemetery has made an offering like flowers and incense. The incense is burnt in a small stove from 8 AM in the yard of Ki Ageng Glego's cemetery. The smoke produces sweet smell. It is meanwhile, in front of Al-Fatah mosque around 11 AM has started the *Reog* performance. They who just visit behind the mosque, go to mosque yard to watch *Reog* performance. Besides, there are some people who just sit in front of their house to have a talk with people around them nearby the *Reog* performance. Moreover, in Ied Mubarak day, they come far away to meet their relatives. While they spend time with their family, they talk with the others and also enjoy the *Reog* performance. Either people who watch *Reog* or just have a chat have the same orientation; that is *ngalap berkah*.

Based on that myth, people in Brijor Lor believe that Ki Ageng Gribig always comes on earth through the *Reog* dancers. With his descend, people hope they got a blessing that Ki Ageng Glego brings to the earth. To welcome the presence of Ki Ageng Glego, the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego that become the community of the society in Brijor Lor performed *Reog*. To make the presence of Ki Ageng Glego can be welcomed by many people, this community choose an important event like the beginning of Shawwal month, which is on 1,2, or 3. Around those days, there are many people gather. In a situation where many people go home and visit each other, they do *Reog* performance as a *ngalap berkah* ceremony for the families. To celebrate Ied Mubarak too, there is *Reog* performance in the yard of Al-Fatah mosque. Therefore, the beginning date around 1,2 or 3 in Shawwal month, in Brijor Lor village, there is always a *Reog* performance as well as *ngalap berkah* from the society in Brijor Lor and around it. In this *ngalap berkah*, people really expect the blessing from God through Ki Ageng Glego.

### The Legend of Ki Ageng Glego

Raden Mas Sura Lawung or known

as Ki Ageng Glego came from Majapahit. Ki Ageng Glego is the war military of Majapahit kingdom. However, one day, Ki Ageng Glego was slandered by the Majapahit relatives, because they were envy and jealous with Ki Ageng Glego and his two relatives, they were Jayengresmi and Selogoro. One day, in Majapahit Kingdom there was a leadership succession. Hayam Wuruk was replaced by Brawijaya. With this succession, there were many slanders, to get rid of the politics rivals. One of the slanders came to one military, who was Ki Ageng Glego. Because of that slander, the King exiled Ki Ageng Glego and his relatives that made them leave Majapahit. The leaving of Ki Ageng Glego was followed by his two best friends, Jayengresmi and Selogoro. They were really best friends. It is like when one feels sick, the others feel sick too. If one feels happy, the others feel happy too. They also had the strong willingness to leave Majapahit kingdom because they were slandered by some people in Majapahit.

On his way at night, they spent night in the house of Sunan Kalijaga's student. Sunan Kalijaga knew the presence of those three people that stayed in his student's house. Then, Sunan Kalijaga asked his student to tell those three people to go to the southwest from Majapahit. By going to the southwest, they finally arrived in one place, which is now called Brijor Lor. When they arrived at Brijor Lor, they did what his Sunan said to do *tapa brata*. *Tapa* means getting away from secular, and *brata* means something that must be done. However, they got different order from the Sunan. Ki Ageng Glego was ordered to deal and immerse in literature field. Jayengresmi was ordered to deal in *kanuraga* or self defense. Selogoro was ordered to deal in spiritualism. Sunan Kalijaga asked them to do so with a reason because they already fulfilled their destiny to do those commands.

When Ki Ageng Glego firstly came in Brijor Lor, the inhabitants were only 10 people. The coming of Ki Ageng Glego made the citizens of Brijor Lor left their hometown. They were the real inhabitant of

Brijo Lor village who hold Buddha. They felt that they had different faith and felt inferior with the presence of Ki Ageng Glego. To built his village, Ki Ageng Glego had been shown by Sunan Kalijaga to adore Allah and did Islam law. According to Sunan Kalijaga's command, Ki Ageng Glego did sermon and spread Islam to all people in Brijo Lor and around it. Ki Ageng Glego also showed the right and the wrong way. He taught to worship God, not stones or woods.

In his sermon, Ki Ageng Glego felt the differences to persuade people to do good deeds. His sermon result brought a result after some years when there were three people who did Islamic law. Seeing that only a few people held Islam, Ki Ageng Glego had a strategic idea. This idea was creating *Reog* art that should be used to gather people. By this art, Ki Ageng Glego spread Islam. This effort was succeed, because when there was a *Reog* performance, many people in Brijo Lor came. They got Islam sermon from Ki Ageng Glego. Some people held Islam.

### Reog Performance

Performance form of SNRBL is divided into three, they are: (1) pre-performance, (2) performance, and (3) closing. The first part, pre-performance is a preparing step done before the performance done. In this part, there is *slametan* ceremony by the community in Brijo Lor, which is one week before the *Reog* performed. This ceremony is accompanied with offering making like, a bunch of banana, rice which is rounded (*golong*), white rice, red rice, *tumpengan*, roasted rooster, *kinang*, and *abon-abon duit satus*, *lodeh soup*, *liman flower* and *incense*. This offering is intended to respect Ki Ageng Glego which was respected as the predecessor of *Reog* creator. Besides, there is also an exercise for dancers and musical players.

A day before the performance, there will be *besik* activity; that is an activity to clean the graveyard area in Ki Ageng Glego cemetery that is done by all society in Brijo Lor. They also set the stage where the

*Reog* performance is carried out around the yard in Al-Fatah mosque. To limit between players and audiences, they build a fence made of steel. As the entrance and exit door, they made *tarub*

The second part, the performance is continued with hitting *bendhe* that is done by predecessor of the society in Brijo Lor that indicates the performance will start. *Bendhe* is hit once, means that all players are putting on make up and costume in their own homes. The next one hour, *bendhe* is hit once, and then twice. It signs that the make up time is almost over. Not long after, the *bendhe* is hit three times to show that the make up time is over. After that, *bendhe* is hit frequently (*nitir*) to show that the players must be in rush to go to Al-Fatah mosque yard.



**Figure 1.** Performing arts reog in the courtyard of the mosque of Al-Fatah, Brijo Lor, (Photo: Sutiyono, 2015)

The *Reog* performance can be detailed as it follows. (1) there is no a strict rule in dance of *Reog*. There is no limitation, so the dance movement seems free, but regular. This dance movement is centered in leg movements that are adjusted to the theme which is welcoming. (2) the musical instruments in *Reog* performance are *kendhang batangan*, *bendhe* with *slendro* notation ( the total is three, which each of them is 2 (*ro*), 1 (*ji*), 5 (*mo*), tambourine and *angklung*. The placement of the musical instruments has been decided in the past and it cannot change. The place of the musical instruments is in the yard of Al-Fatah mosque. The song played like *Monggang* by using three notation, such as 2 (*ro*), 1 (*ji*), 5 (*mo*)

with vigorous and fluent rhythm each scene. (3) the make up put on is just to add aesthetic value and to differentiate between players and audience. The characters used are a manly man character. The costume worn is also simple. The properties used are *kuda kepang*, *dodor* (bamboo stick), *jebeng* (palm trunk), *sworn*, *tameng gentelo* (wood), and *gembung* (made of mortil sleeve with traditional herb wrapped in white cloth).

The *Reog* performance is actually not limited by the length of the show will be around 5 until 6 hours. It starts at 11 AM until 5 PM. The place is in the yard of Al-Fattah mosque. The decision location is based on the place of Ki Ageng Glego's cemetery. The location of Al-Fattah mosque is near the King Ageng Glego's graveyard. The purpose with this rule is to remember the role of one predecessor called Ki Ageng Glego.

## CONCLUSION

Community in Brijo Lor village who strives hard to preserve *Reog* is a strategy to preserve *Reog* which is effective in improving the position to the society inside and outside Brijo Lor, Trucuk, Klaten. In globalization era, many traditional arts are weakened even extinct, but *Reog* still exists because it is maintained by the community in Brijo Lor village. In front of general public, the society in Brijo Lor called themselves as the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego which is bound by routine meetings followed by the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego come from inside or outside Brijo Lor once a month. This strategy is considered to be the most possible thing to be done by the community in Brijo Lor as the actors of *Reog* preservation in its relation to community objective as the descendants of Ki Ageng Glego who see that many traditional arts are weakened and extinct as the effect of globalization era. This strategy is also a means to develop many efforts in strengthening cultural identity politics and the community in Brijo Lor village.

*Reog* performance which is con-

ducted regularly is a mediation to supernatural world; that is connecting people who are being *ngalap berkah* to Ki Ageng Glego spirit. It is caused because when the *Reog* is performed, Ki Ageng Glego spirit come down to the earth. Many people come to watch *Reog* performance to *ngalap berkah* for the coming down of Ki Ageng Glego spirit. This myth of Ki Ageng Glego becomes a means to give identity politics in community of Brijo Lor village through *Reog* performance.

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