

Banyumasan Songs As Banyumas People's Character Reflection

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Abstract

This study aims to identify a number of legendary Banyumasan songs. The fact that a large number of the songs exist and people sing the songs all the time shows that the songs have their own uniqueness. This study takes place in Banyumas regency. By doing performance study and composition, this study identifies the form and the structure of Banyumasan songs, and the moral value of Banyumasan music, especially the songs in Banyumasan music. The result of the study shows that the songs in the art performances in Banyumas commonly use classic immutable songs. The lyrics in the classic Banyumasan songs use Ngoko Javanese in Banyumasan dialect. The rhyme of the lyrics is usually in the form of *wangsalan*, *parikan*, and *Essen-Essen*. The rhyme contains funny and entertaining riddles. The lyrics of Banyumasan songs reflect Banyumas people's character and the dream/utopia of the people's ideology. The character is shown in the use of ngoko Javanese in Banyumas dialect which shows that the society is *blakasuta* or egalitarian who considers all people in the world has the same level and must be honest.

Keywords: reflection; social culture; *blakasuta*; *senggakan*; Banyumasan songs

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INTRODUCTION

There are many values we can dig from the art performances in Banyumas, especially *lengger* art (a traditional dance) and *ebeg* (horse braid), starting from the game patterns, the kind of the music used, the song type, and when and where the performances are held. The songs sung in *lengger* performance are different from the songs used in rituals, like earth alms and sea alms. Similarly, the songs used as background music in *ebeg* are also different.

The way *calung* played and the lyrics of the songs in Banyumas language creates its uniqueness. There is a rough feel of the game reflected the character of the peop-

le on the way they speak and act, but we can feel the plainness in the song lyrics. It is very contrast to the fine art of the palace. Does this reflect the people's character or is it the type of musical instrument material which forces the people to play the instrument that way? On the level value, the value developed by Banyumasan songs is not quite different from high-leveled culture.

With its own special characteristics, Banyumasan songs do not seem to undergo any changes on its characters, especially on the language used in the lyrics. How the songs follow the Banyumas people's condition can be seen on the song structure, lyric character (the language style), and the way they are performed. These are interesting things to be investigated.

In the context of Javanese cultural development, Banyumas is often considered to be a marginal area (Koentjaraningrat, 1984) which connotes to being rude, left behind, and uncivilized if we compare it to more developed culture in *the negarigung area* (where the power of palace authority exists) which is inspired by the *adiluhung* concept. Banyumas culture or Banyumasan appears as folk culture developed in the proletariat, away from the hegemony of palace life.

Basically, Banyumas culture cannot be separated from Javanese culture. However, because of its condition, the geographical location which is away from the palace authority, and the life background and Banyumas people's view of life which shows the spirit of citizenship, Banyumas culture is different from its root culture.

Banyumas culture was a product of old Javanese culture combined with the local culture. On its development, Banyumas culture was affected by new Javanese culture, Sundanese culture, Islamic culture, and western culture. The elements of old Javanese culture (ancient Javanese and middle-aged Javanese culture) were affected by Indian culture (Hindu and Buddha) had been long spread away by a pastor named Aji Saka. The cultural treasures had been developed in villages as a form of local genius and an integral part of an underprivileged community.

Priyadi's study (2007) shows that Banyumas people has a special character called *cablaka*. *Cablaka* is the main character of Banyumas people. *Blakasuta*, *thongmelog*, or *cablaka* express same meanings, that is being frank when speaking. Banyumas people with its Banyumasan dialect have built an egalitarian culture which recognizes the equality between citizens. It affects the way they speak. The song lyrics in Banyumas calung also shows the egalitarian culture.

The song lyrics and the way they sing the Banyumasan songs in Lenggeng performance cannot be separated from the characteristics. The language used which is considered rude reflects the way people

live their life. The same thing is shown in the way people sing the songs and the musical instruments. The musical instruments made of bamboo but played like bronze musical instruments create different sound character; this means the way people play the bamboo musical instruments are different so they can have similar sound as the bronze one. It shows people's modest and practical way of thinking.

Behind the modesty of the musical instruments played, the songs, the language, and the way it is performed, lengger has the value of local wisdom which needs special attention. Meliono (2012) states that the local wisdom in Banyumas lengger includes religiosity, harmony, togetherness, and aesthetics. In his study, he describes that the local wisdom exists on the performance elements, like belief, art, language, knowledge, organization, economic system, and technology.

The lyrics of Banyumasan songs are in Javanese and use Banyumasan dialect reflects the Banyumas people's characters which can be their local wisdom. It is proven by the fact that the songs have existed for years. Banyumas people never get bored to listen to the songs by listening, singing, and dancing when the songs are performed in music performances like lengger, ebeg, or other arts in Banyumas.

Banyumasan *gendhing* has three unique forms: *wetanan* (Surakarta and Yogyakarta style), *Banyumasan*, and *Kulonon* (Sudarso, 1999, p.120). Those three forms can be seen from the form of the *gendhing*, the way people beat the instruments (*garap ricikan* or instruments) and *garap gendhing* (Darno, 2006). Darno (2006) states that it is important to revitalize the unique Banyumasan music, so he reconstructed Banyumasan *garap gendhing* which is usually performed in music performance in Banyumas, like *Ricik-ricik*, *Sekar Gadung*, *Blendrong Manis*, *Senggot*, etc. His study was inspired by the academicians' worries on the disappearance of the genuine Banyumasan style because of the strong effect of Sundanese music.

Another study on Banyumasan mu-

sic was done by Yusmanto (2006). In line with Darno, Yusmanto tried to find the identity of Banyumas culture through the calung music in his research entitled *Calung (Kajian Identitas Kebudayaan Banyumas)*. Yusmanto reveals how the identity is represented in calung music performance and its relation to the social life of Banyumas people.

This paper will present some elements of songs that reflects Banyumas people's character. The elements include the song presentation on art performances, like *lengger*, *ebeg* and other Banyumas arts.

METHOD

This study takes place in Banyumas regency. By using performance study and composition, this study identifies forms and the structure of Banyumasan songs, the moral values of Banyumasan music, especially songs in Banyumasan music and its relation with Banyumas people's character.

The data were taken by doing observation, interview, and document study. Content analysis of the songs available on performance videos and audios to analyze the music, form, and the song lyrics. Interactive analysis by Miles and Huberman is also done to analyze the relationship between the songs, the music performed, and Banyumasan music and songs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Banyumas people's character

Banyumas people are known as frank people (*cablaka*, *blakasuta*). The historical background is believed to be the reason of Banyumas people's character as it was a mixed between Sundanese and Javanese (Priyadi, 2015). Cablaka has become the central point of its cultural system which means cablaka has become valuable value in Banyumas people's life (Priyadi, 2018, p.159).

Banyumas language used by people in Banyumas is from Javanese with Banyumas dialect. It is believed that it was

from original ancient Javanese called Jawadwipa. The original Javanese is the one which has not undergone changes like new Javanese. The new Javanese is used by the Javanese people in the east part, used by people who live in the palace and its neighborhood, like in Yogyakarta or Surakarta. The society is called *Nagarigung* Javanese. On the other hand, Banyumas people is called *Mancanagari Kulon* society.

The language used by the people who live near the palace have some levels, depending on their position in the society. It was created to differ the people's position in the society. While *Mancanagari Kulon* society does not recognize levels in the society. Therefore, the language used in the society is considered rude.

Generally, for Banyumas people, one will feel more respected if s/he calls her/his interlocutor by name. It can be seen in their daily life. They call themselves *inyong* and *ko*, *kono*, and *kowe*, or *rika* to call others. Campaigns of standard Javanese were done intensively by the kings of south Central Java kingdoms to the elite traditional people. However, Banyumas people still use Banyumas accent called *Ngapak* language in their daily life. Soegito, a Banyumas cultural figure, states that although Banyumas people speak *Ngapak* language, it does not mean that they do not know *undak-usuk* (levels of language use). They do have levels of language use and use it in their daily life, like when they speak to elder people, respected people, and in a formal Banyumas traditional event or other cultural Banyumas events. He does not agree when people use *ngoko* Banyumas language on Language Day to speak to everyone (the interview was done on 12 December 2015).

Cablaka is a spontaneous character established by Banyumas people to phenomena they see without any disguise. Cablaka is Banyumas person's character which always tells the truth. This means Banyumas people like to say whatever they see without hiding anything. Because of this, other people from other area think that Banyumas people do not know ethics,

straightforward, and even rude.

This supposition is normal as the way Banyumas people speak with their *cablaka* style sometimes hurt other's feeling, especially those who do not understand their style, sensitive, even to among Banyumas people themselves. Their way of Banyumas people speaking like *penjorangan*, *semblothongan*, *glewehan*, or *brecuh* is sometimes too much as embodiment of *cablaka*. Banyumas people do not consider this as a problem. Therefore, *cablaka* should be considered as a frank speaking, open minded, friendly, or free expression in stating something without any disguises (*tanpa tedheng aling-aling*).

Mr. Bawor mentioned an example of song called "Eling-eling". He states that this song describes more about Banyumas people's life. It describes the philosophy of Banyumas people that only to God we can comply, while we are at the same level with others. We have to know our identity as God's creature. "Eling-eling" song tells a lot about the condition. The lyric of "Senggot" song tells about honesty which is in line with *blakasuta* character (act as it is) of Banyumas people and persuading others to always be honest.

Banyumas people's life which tends to be egalitarian puts everyone on the same levels. Therefore, they always use *inyong* and *kowe* or *ko* or *kono* or *rika* in Banyumas dialect. They do not use *sapa sira sapa ing-sun* which tends to be more feudalistic, which puts people on different levels: high and low. *Thokmelong* is the way they create friendliness to others although they are not from Banyumas (*padha-padha* or *wonge dhe-wek*). This does not mean that they want to show over friendliness and have negative aims behind it because they never use close relationship with others for their own interest (Priyadi, 2015).

Literary value in Banyumasan songs

Cakepan is one form of literature in the lyric of *sindhengan*; the lyrics or texts used by *sindheng* or Javanese singer in *kawitan*. *Cakepan* tells about human life: advice, character education, family life, life gui-

dance, etc. *Cakepan* in Banyumas also tells about those things. Although they are not many in numbers, Banyumas *cakepan sindhenan* tells advice, ideology, and dreams or utopia. Utopia is the dream of an ideology. The ideology is local, used only by the Banyumas people in the area, especially Javanese and native Banyumas people or *Panginyongan*. "Eling-eling" song reminds us to always be aware and remember God. Only to God we should be respectful, while to other people, we are at the same level. Another example is "Gunungsari" song. This tells about a dream country, like the meaning of "gunungsari" which means happiness as high as a mountain.

Some kinds of *cakepan* in Banyumasan songs are *wangsalan*, *parikan*, *isen-isen*, and other kind of *cakepan* which uses beauty, especially the recent songs which are in free form of *cakepan*. *Wangsalan* is a song lyric in the form of *cangkriman* (quiz or riddles) which answer is available in the content. *Parikan* is a poetic lyric which has *sampiran*(question) and *isi* (answer) in one stanza. There are two forms of *parikan*: stanza of two lines and four lines. *Isen-isen* is certain phrases used to fill the gap on the free part of *wangsalan* or *parikan*. It should also be used in Jalungmas dance creation.

Wangsalan

Wangsalan is a kind of Javanese literary work especially in the west part of Central Java, including Banyumas, Brebes, and Cirebon. *Wangsalan* used in Banyumasan songs and *tarling* Cirebon gives cheerful feeling. Songs with *sigrak* use funny lyrics as it has funny but beautiful riddles. It is beautiful because it is a literary work. The same sounds occurring in the phrases used create beauty and fun. This character shows that Banyumas people tend to like cheerful songs.

Wangsalan is a kind of song which sentences only consist of two phrases, containing riddles and the answer itself. Because it is a riddle, we have to find the answer by connecting the words in the sentence (Waridi, 2002: 127-128). Budiarti mentions four kinds of *wangsalan*: *wangsa-*

lan lamba, *wangsalan rangkep* (camboran), *wangsalan memet*, and *wangsalan padintenan*. Of those four, Banyumasan songs are included in the form of *wangsalan lamba* and *rangkep*. *Wangsalan lamba* has only one answer, while *wangsalan rangkep* has more than one answer consisting of two phrases. The first phrase is the question and the second is the answer. The following is the example of *wangsalan*.

Roko cendak, *neges-neges ana apa*.

Roko cendak = tegesan

Janur gunung (aren), sakulon Banjar Patoman

Janur gunung = aren; sakulon Banjar Patoman = Tasik malaya

Kadingaren = wong bagus gasik tekane

Suket latar, celulang ciut godonge (teki)

Suket latar celulang ciut gidhone = teki

Aja dengki wong urip bareng sak bumi

On the part of "Ricik-ricik" song, the phrase "*Janur gunung, sakulon Banjar Patoman*" is a question which answer we can find on the next phrase. The phrase "*Kadingaren, kadingaren wong bagus gasik tekane*" is the answer of the riddle in previous phrase. The word "*janur gunung*" in Banyumas language means "*aren*" which appears in the answer phrase "*kadengaren*" which has the same sound as '*aren*' in the end of the word '*kadengaren*'. While Banyumas people know Banjar Patoman as Tasik, a district in West Java. Therefore, the phrase '*Banjar Patoman*' is answered on the answer phrase "*wong bagus gasik tekane*" where "*gasik*" is slipped of the word "*tasik*". Slipped words for Javanese people including Banyumas is usually in the form of the same sound at the last phrase or word of a *parikan*.

The form of *wangsalan* used in "*Janur gunung, sakulon Banjar Patoman/ Kadingaren wong bagus gasik tekane*" is the most popular *wangsalan* in Banyumas. It is usually used by *pesindhen* to fill lyrics of other songs, like "Ricik-ricik" and of one kind. It can also be used to change any song lyrics, if the *pesindhen* forget the lyrics they sing. They are free to apply this. If they find too

short or too long phrase, the *pesindhen* can cut or repeat the phrase twice or three times to make it fit to the beat of the song.

Parikan

Parikan is a simple poetic lyric in Javanese which has two lines (phrases) with the same sounds at the end of its line. Banyumasan Javanese music (*gendhing*) usually uses *parking* and *wangsalan*. Besides that, there are some *gendhing* using poetic lyrics, for example: *Gendhing Renging Manis, Bendrong Kulon, Ijo-ijo, Malang Dhoi, and Dhober* (Budiarti, 2017). The following is the example of *parikan*.

Nandur jahe, ning galengan

Kono bae, nggo delengan

(Growing ginger in the field, only you we will see)

Dina minggu ora prei, ditunggu-tunggu ora diwei

(It is Sunday but it is not a day off, we are waiting, but nobody gives it to us)

Kiwa tengen, nyangking ember

Tamba kangen, lungguh jejer

(Bringing pails on the right and the left, sitting together is the cure of lonesome)

Awan-awan diundang Mauludan, sega goreng lawuhe tempe

Kapan-kapan nyong keturutan, bisa gandeng karo sliran

(Afternoon invitation for a party, fried rice with tempe as side dish)

One day my dream will come true, I can walk holding your hand)

The most important thing of singing *parikan* is the happy tone. The happy tone can appear in happy songs. *Parikan* can stand on its own as song lyrics or as *senggakan* (interjection) in the middle of songs or *gendhing*.

Musical elements: Senggakan and Crowded Concept

Senggakan comes from the word *senggak* which means *nyuwara gijak arame mbarengi* (making connection) *unining gamelan*

(*sindhén*) (making sound to make connection with the sound of gamelan or *sindhén*. *Senggakan* gives crowded impression (Budhiarti, 2017). *Senggakan* means single or choir sound using *cakepan parikan* and or a series of words (although sometimes they do not have meaning), even they sound vulgar (rude), the only function is to create crowded situation in performing a *gendhing*. *Senggakan* is universal which means it can be done by male or female dancers, *sindhén*, *penayagan*, or even the audience. It is done spontaneously as a form of self-actualization in the frame of *Gandhian* or performance (Murwaningrum, 2012, p. 141). It is very flexible which means it can be translated by anyone in any way as long as the meaning is logic and contextual. *Senggakan* in *gendhing* Banyumasan is as vocal *gendhing*, as the performance will tend to be quiet (Budhiarti, 2017).

Senggakan used in Banyumasan *gendhing* is *senggakan* without songs; it follows the pattern of drum beat and *senggakan pematut*. *Senggakan* without a song is usually used when the flow of the rhyme is good and inline with the rhyme of *sabetan balungan*. *Cakepan* used usually in the form of the syllable, like 'ut, ho, oh, eh, ah, yah' etc.

Senggakan in Banyumas music is a symbol of freedom expression of Banyumas people. *Senggakan* creates a crowded situation, cheerful, and sometimes vulgar as an artistic expression of their freedom, equality, and honesty (interview with Sugito, December 2015). In puppet show, we can feel crowded situation instead of its basic rules, so the audience and the puppeteer can measure the success of the performance from the number of audience watching the puppet show.



Figure 1. *Penayagan* who also sings *senggakan*

In *sindhén* or *gerongan*, we will hear *senggakan* (interjection vocal). It is called interjection because *senggakan* is usually used as an interjection in the vocal gap. *Senggakan* can consist of one word, or one sentence, or even one *wangsalan*. In the puppet show by the puppeteer Jemblung, for example, *senggakan* acts as vital interjections because the musical instrument is the vocalists of the show (Sukarno, 1998, p. 6).

Senggakan is one of the elements of Banyumasan *gendhing*. *Lengger* show uses Banyumasan *gendhing* as the back sound. *Senggakan* is sometimes considered as complement in *lengger* show, but for *lengger*, *sindhén*, and *penayagan*, *senggakan* is the soul of the show. *Senggakan* creates a *rame* (lively) situation which becomes the climax of a show. Studies on *senggakan* are still limited.

Senggakan is like a game. Banyumasan *senggakan* is a game of sound and meaningful/not meaningful words in a *gendhing*. *Senggakan* as a game is freer and voluntarily done but it should follow the guidelines, which will affect the *senggakan* pattern. The guidelines are classified in musical factor (textual) and non musical factor (contextual). The musical factor includes *gendhing* on the show, while non musical factor is the performer, the cultural background, and the show context.

Senggakan is universal and has various musical pattern. *Senggakan* has energetic and dynamic rhythm, uplifting spirit, and responds to the *gendhing*/music. Word game used in *senggakan* is in the form of syllables, politic, farming, economy satire, and even sexuality. Banyumas people have their own aesthetic taste to see Banyumasan *senggakan*. They think that the more *senggakan* in a performance, the better it uplifts the spirit, so the *lengger* performance is more successful. However, good *senggakan* can influence all performers, *lengger*, *penayagan*, *sindhén*, and audience. *Senggakan* with good quality has a perfect time and text when the singers sing it

(Murwaningrum, 2012, p.141).



Figure 2. Audience expression because of the songs and *senggakan*

One of success indicators of a show in Banyumas is the crowded situation. Crowded here means noisy or things which will disturb one's comfort. They also see the crowded situation as a need. *Rame* (lively situation) has a long history in human life (Mulyana, 2012, p. 60). We can see this situation in expressing the songs used in *lengger*, *ebeg*, or puppet performance. The crowded but lively situation can be created by the singers (*pesindhen/penggerong*) or *niyaga*, and the *dalang* using the *senggakan*. The audience can also take part in the crowded situation by getting on the stage and *nyawer* (giving money).

Besides *senggakan*, another vocal game similar to *senggakan* is also used, called *isen-isen* or *abon-abon*. *Abon-abon* is used as an intermezzo or complement. Some examples of *abon-abon* used by *sindhen* are *rama*, *rama-rama*, *ramane*, *yo mas*, and *kakang*. The word *rama* appears not only in *isen-isen* but also in other Banyumasan songs' lyrics, like in *kembang Glepang* and *Kulu-kulu*.

The words appear as a representative of expression which are commonly used in their daily life when they have a conversation. Therefore, *isen-isen* appears in Banyumasan songs.

CONCLUSION

The songs used in art performances in Banyumas usually use classical eternal

songs. The songs have existed since ten years ago since the *lengger* performance, puppet show and *ebeg* appeared. The eternal songs like *Eling-eling*, *Ricik-ricik*, *Bendrong Kulon*, *Renggong Manis*, etc. show that they will have the same characters. The change only appears on the music which tends to be more cheerful, like Banyumas people's characters.

The lyrics of classic Banyumasan songs usually use *Ngoko* Javanese with Banyumas dialect. The lyrics usually use *cakepan wangsalan*, *parikan*, and *isen-isen*. The content of *wangsalan* is funny and entertaining riddles. Sometimes the *sindhen* or *penayaga* will create their own *cakepan*. *Sindhen* or *penayaga* will also add some song lyrics in their performance, like *senggakan* and *isen-isen* to create lively situation. The crowded situation is created by *sindhen* and *panayaga* because the success of the performance in Banyumas is measured from the crowded situation. If it is crowded, it means that the audience, the guests, or the society likes the performance.

The Banyumasan songs' lyrics show the character of Banyumas people, and dream/utopia of their ideology. The character can be seen from the language used: *Ngoko* Javanese with Banyumas dialect which shows that they are egalitarian or *blakasuta* which sees everyone in the world equal and they have to be honest. The rude and *blak-blakan* language combined with the *sigrak*/ dynamic music which sounds more like west Javanese especially because of the drum beat. However, Banyumas people still use some levels of language in the song lyrics if the songs are in the form of a dialogue between the elderly to the young, they use a mixed of *krama* and *ngoko* language.

In general, Banyumasan songs' lyrics are fresh and funny. This is the effect of *wangsalan* used in the song (riddles/*cangkriman*), *parikan* (Javanese poetic lyric which has satire meaning), and the utopia of their ideology which is always fun so it creates fun. The funny impression from the *senggakan* is done by performers, like *sindhen* and *penayaga*. The *senggakan* is so-

metimes vulgar. The words used in *senggakan* can also create fun followed by a dance move from *lengger*.

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