Musical Facts and Sustainability of Trunthung Music in Eco-cultural Studies

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Abstract

This study aims to review the sustainability of Trunthung Music that shapes an ecosystem within the context of eco-culture. The study belongs to the nature of qualitative research with an interdisciplinary approach and several ecological concepts that reflect the culture of the peasant community over the slope of Merbabu Mountain in Magelang. The study itself is conducted in Warangan Hamlet and Gejayan Hamlet, the Regency of Magelang. The data are gathered through observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews with the informants related to the Trunthung Music. Then, the source triangulation technique is implemented through the test of trustworthiness by inspecting the data on the development of Trunthung Music toward the artists in Warangan Hamlet and the members of Lima Gunung Community. The data that have been attained from various sources are described, categorized, and eventually analyzed so that the ecosystem of Trunthung Music that has been on the progress can be identified. The results of the study show that Trunthung Music has been a performance that combines sonoric, kinesthetic, and visual dimensions, including their association with the natural condition and the peasant life over the Slope of Merbabu. The dialectics of Trunthung Music and the components of its ecosystem are in interaction with one another, resulting in the sustainability of the music until the present days. Then, the components of such ecosystem are the local agents who create the Trunthung Music and their interaction with the art community, be it with the Lima Gunung Community in the context of the Regency of Magelang and with the artists living outside the Regency of Magelang. In addition, the presence of Trunthung Music is associated with the traditional rites in the Warangan Hamlet, such as Nyadran Kali and Tapak Jaran Sembrani. All of these activities have good correlations among music, environment, and culture within the context of eco-culture.

Keywords: eco-culture, sustainability, trunthung music, ecosystem, musical fact


INTRODUCTION

Music is an entity that will always be present in every line of human life. In a wider context, music has a close association with both the environment and the social life of the supporting community. In relation to the statement, one of such traditional arts that have grown and developed well is Trunthung Music, which can be found in the middle Warangan Hamlet community – the Province of Central Java Musik.

An interesting phenomenon regarding Trunthung Music dates back to when Sutanto Mendut and Eko Sunyoto initiated a colossal musical performance as a
tourism program for the foreign tourists under the cooperation with Aman Jiwo Borobudur Hotel. As musical instrument, in the beginning, Trunthung accompanies the performance of Soreng Dance (Fitriarasri, 2019; Yuliastuti, 2016).

Trunthung Music, invented in 2002, has expected an enormous development from the perspective of sonoric, kinesthetic, and even visual dimension. The statement is confirmed by the characteristic of Trunthung Music itself, namely flexibility. As a result, Trunthung Music can easily collaborate with any music genre.

According to Antara Newspaper in 2016, Trunthung has even been performed in Borobudur Jazz Festival under the title Kolaborasi Jazz Trunthung Lima Gunung (Efizudin, 2016). Then, 2019 has become the momentum for the community over the Slope of Merbabu Mountain. In this year, the community there had successfully held a performance over the Presidential Palace under the title “Kesenian Soreng, Tarian dari Gunung Masuk ke Istana” (Hidayat, 2019). One of the art performers from the community over the Slope of Merbabu Mountain named Slamet even states that Soreng Art has been going worldwide, especially after its performance on the Presidential palace. The performance has dynamic and complete movements such as peasants cultivating rice fields, complete with Trunthung Music performance that mingles with the highly dynamic movement and beat of the feet (Hidayat, 2019).

Music cannot be separated from the other elements, including dance or movement (Nattiez, 1990, pp. 41–44). Despite that, the development of performance should have support from several components within an art ecosystem. Indeed, some traditional arts in Indonesia cannot be separated from the elements of music, dance, and even costume in use, such as the case that has been found in Trunthung Music.

In the beginning, Trunthung Music used to be a part of Soreng Dance. However, nowadays, the music is ready to be designed as a musical performance still with the visual and kinesthetic elements that reflect the peasant life over the Slope of Merbabu Mountain, Magelang.

The ecosystem that Trunthung Music has formed is interesting to review by paying attention to the components related to its development. Therefore, the discussions related to Trunthung Music will be based on three aspects/dimensions, namely: (1) sonoric dimension, which is used for textually viewing the performance of Trunthung Music; (2) visual dimension, which is used for viewing the costumes in use for every performance of Trunthung Music; and (3) kinesthetic dimension, which is used for viewing the pattern formulation during its performance. (Nattiez, 1990; Triyanuartha, 2015).

A number of studies toward Trunthung Music have been done. For example, a study by Indariyana et al. (2018) has discussed the development of Trunthung Music in Gejayan Hamlet by using the Functionalism-Structuralism approach. Their study shows that Gamelan Trunthung has considered a system that holds the possession of several mutually influencing and functioning parts. On the contrary, the present study, which tackles the review toward the ecosystem of Trunthung Music, has wider coverage because the present study strives to trace the interrelationship between Trunthung Music and cultural and environmental components.

In another context, a study on ecology and music has been conducted by de Fretes & Listiowati, (2020) and the results of their study show that there has been an interdependent relationship within each performance component. In relation to the statement, the performance transformation becomes the consequences of the natural trait within the network system such as non-linear dynamics, spontaneous appearance, and feedback cycle. Despite that, the present study’s focus is related more to the factors that underlie the sonoric and the non-sonoric musical facts. As a result, the novelty in the present study lies in the review of far more complex Traditional Music since the present study links the
Trunthung Music to the factors of the natural condition and the peasant life within the Warangan Hamlet.

In a wider context, a study toward the nature and the culture in the Warangan Hamlet and the Traditional Art in the Gejayan Hamlet contributes the reference in the form of social and art life that has developed up to date (Handayani, 2017; Hermawan, 2011; Indariyana, 2019; Khairunnisa, 2016; Lestari, 2016; Yuliastuti, 2016). Unfortunately, there are still few studies discussing the Trunthung Music, especially in relation to the review that uses ecological concepts that discuss the interrelationship among music, culture, and environment.

The Eco-Culture concept is one of the reviews that discuss art as a product of culture, and thus it is always related to the surrounding nature. One of the studies on the relationship between environment and culture has been conducted by Saepuloh (2019). In his study, he reviews a traditional ceremony known as Buang Jong. This traditional ceremony is performed by the people of Sawang Tribe in Belitung Island as part of their offering toward the god of the sea. This traditional ceremony is a reflection of the desire of Sawang Tribe to live a harmonious life with nature. Interestingly, this traditional ceremony is almost identical with several rituals in the Warangan Hamlet name Ritual Nyadran Kali, Aum Tandur, and Aum Panen. Despite the similarity, the rituals in the Warangan Hamlet always involve art as part of the rituals that should be performed to manifest the interaction between human beings and nature.

A review on Eco-Culture is considered appropriate for viewing the components that have been created in the ecosystem space of Trunthung Music, including the socio-cultural conditions in Warangan Hamlet, which cannot be set apart from the engagement with the nature and the ritual that the local people perform. A good ecosystem will create sustainability of an art that grows and develops in the middle of a community or nature.

Departing from the background that has been explained, the current study is expected to identify how the ecosystem of Trunthung Music has been formed by viewing the sonoric dimension, the visual dimension, and the kinesthetic dimension. In viewing these dimensions, the researcher will implement the concept of eco-culture in order to identify the ecosystem that forms the sustainability of Trunthung Music in the Regency of Magelang (Allen, 2011; Allen et al., 2014; Allen & Dawe, 2016; Edwards, 2015; Nattiez, 1990).

The subject is deemed to contribute both ontological and epistemological novelty in the material and formal object in relation to the sustainability of Trunthung Music. Thus, the present study is expected to deliver a new discourse with regards to the sustainability of an art with support from an ecosystem. In other words, an ecosystem can be formed out of multiple factors, both in the smaller and the wider scope.

**METHOD**

The study has been conducted in Warangan Hamlet and several other locations of Trunthung Music performance throughout the Regency of Magelang. Warangan Hamlet has been considered as the origin of Trunthung Music. Therefore, it is expected that the background of development for Trunthung Music can be identified.

The study has been conducted under the qualitative method using ecumusicology, namely music, culture, and environment (Brewer, 2000; Rohendi Rohidi, 2011). Thus, the focus of the review will be on three dimensions namely sonoric dimension, kinesthetic dimension, and visual dimension. Therefore, the approach that has been adopted in the conduct of the study is the interdisciplinary approach.

The data gathering techniques that have been implemented in the study are observation, interview, recording, and note-taking. In ethnography, the data are gathered through multiple procedures and
the intensity of these procedures varies according to the ethnography that has been implemented. Therefore, in the light of the statement, the researcher will take field notes based on the data that have been gathered from the interview, direct observation toward the activities of the participants in the study, and the observation toward the existence of Trunthung Music (Ninip, 2010). Then, the observation method that has been implemented in the study is the direct observation. Through this method, the researcher has used direct involvement with the research site or the local people to witness and take notes on both the training process and the community life in the Wa-rangan Hamlet.

The data in the form of documentation are attained from Sanggar Seni Wa-rangan. The documentation itself is the records from the time when Trunthung Music was performed as a musical performance for the first time and other records from when Trunthung Music was performed in several important events (Rohendi Rohidi, 2011, p. 206).

The concept of ethnography has also been adopted in the conduct of the present study in order to attain more comprehensive data. Ethnography itself can be defined as a written description about social organizations, social activities, symbols, material sources, and interpretation practices of certain groups of people (Brewer, 2000; Gay y Blasco, 2006; Wilson, 2001).

In analyzing the data that have been gathered, the researcher has established the correlation between the components within the ecosystem of Trunthung Music based on the musical facts and the data from the relationship between the Trunthung Music and its cultural and environmental factors. This correlation becomes the background aspects for the determination of musical ideation determination and its linkage to the ecosystem in the context of eco-culture that has been formed within the development of Trunthung Music (Brewer, 2000; Ninip, 2010). The multiple data sources attained are later described, categorized, and analysed to identify the ecosystem of Trunthung Music that has developed up to the present day.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Musical Facts of Trunthung Music in Eco-Cultural Studies

Etymologically, the term eco-culture is derived from the term ecology and culture. In this regard, there is a dialectics that has been shaped in understanding the life of the community and the accompanying culture and environment. Thus, cultural ecology can be defined as a system of human knowledge as a social being in understanding and interpreting the cultural environment, including nature (Sudikan, 2016, p. 167).

The concept of musical facts explains that there are several components within the performance of Trunthung Music that have been reviewed from the perspective of three dimensions namely sonoric dimension, visual dimension, and kinesthetic dimension. These components are related to one another within the context of social life and natural environment in which the Trunthung Music has developed (Nattiez, 1990). Departing from this understanding, the researcher would like to try to define the theoretical framework of the musical fact in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. The Concept of Musical Facts of Trunthung Music (Source: Sinaga, 2021)**

**Sonoric dimension** is one of the elements that has been implemented for textually reviewing the characteristics of Trunthung Music. Thus, a more in-depth discussion in the study will review the characteristic that Trunthung Music has internalized in correlation with the phenomena in a certain context. For example, through...
the in-depth discussion the researcher will try to find the correlation between the movement in the performance of Trunthung Music and the costume that should be worn as part of the visual performance.

Trunthung Music is a colossal musical performance that was invented in 2002 under the initiative of Sutanto Mendut and Eko Sunyoto. At first, Trunthung was used to control for the rhythm and the tempo within the performance Soreng Dance. However, several patterns in the music that accompanied the Soreng Dance became the main characteristic that has marked the existence of Trunthung Music. Therefore, the main characteristic of Trunthung Music is still in tact despite the fact that it can be staged as a musical performance or in collaboration with other music genres.

The transition on the pattern of Trunthung Music that has been usually performed from one part to another can be described in Figure 2 as follows:

![Figure 2. Trunthung Music Rhythmic Pattern](Source: Sinaga, 2021)

The pattern in Figure 2 is one of the peculiar characteristics of Trunthung Music. This pattern will always be found whether the Trunthung Music is performed along with Soreng Dance or the Trunthung Music is performed a mere musical performance. In terms of quantity, the number of Trunthung instruments for the Soreng Dance performance and for the musical performance is rather different. For the Soreng Dance performance, the number of Trunthung instrument players is usually one person. On the contrary, for the musical performance, which usually takes the colossal form, the number of Trunthung instrument players usually ranges between 10 to 30 people, as has been shown in Figure 3.

The sonoric or sound dimension that has been resulted during the performance of Trunthung Music is believed to be the representation of the energetic peasant life by the people of Warangan Hamlet. The statement is in accordance with the argument proposed by (Mulyana, 2002, p. 71), who states that human beings use symbols within the symbolic interaction in order to represent what they believe with one another and to influence the symbol as well when they establish interaction with both their social environment and their natural environment.

![Figure 3. Trunthung Music Performance at the Tapak Jaran Sembrani Ritual at Warangan Hamlet. (Source: Sinaga, 2021)](Figure 3)

![Figure 4. Trunthung as Accompaniment in Soreng Dance (Source: Sinaga, 2021)](Figure 4)

Organologically, Trunthung refers to the tambourine-like musical instrument that has rhymes (irama rampak) and it should be played by using a bamboo stick. The sound generated from Trunthung as a musical instrument is widely known by the people of Warangan Hamlet. Therefore, it is no wonder that the beating sound of Trunthung can also serve as a medium of communication among the people, giving a signal that an event is about to begin. In a wider review of sound or music that has a relationship with culture or natural environment, the discourse that has been generated can be categorized as a discourse of ecomusicology. The Grove Dictionary of
American Music (Oxford University Press, 2014) defines “ecomusicology” (or “ecocritical musicology”) as:

“...the study of music, culture, and nature in all the complexities of those terms. Ecomusicology considers musical and sonic issues, both textual and performative, related to ecology and the natural environment (Berndt-Morris, 2014).”

The people of Warangan Hamlet are still fond of Trunthung Performance. Such a high level of interest cannot be set apart from the role of Handoko as an artist who keeps working on and collaborating Trunthung into a very beautiful and harmonious performance. As a musical performance, Trunthung Music offers the sound and the visual dimension that takes participation in reflecting the condition of both nature and the social life among the people over the Slope of Merbabu Mountain.

The Visual Dimension in Trunthung Music’s performance is apparent from the costumes to wear during the performance. The eco-cultural condition of the Five Mountain (Lima Gunung) is clearly visually represented within the costumes that the performers of Trunthung Music wear. The condition of the nature in the Warangan Hamlet, the Slope of Merbabu Mountain, is highly associated with agricultural life. Therefore, it is no wonder that the costumes that the performers wear in several events of Trunthung Music Performance use materials made of rice straw, woven bamboo, and alike.

The performance of Trunthung Music in several events throughout Warangan Hamlet is inseparable from both the ritual and the cultural performance that the local people hold. The natural stage setting also contributes to the impression of agricultural life as the reflective eco-culture among the people of Warangan Hamlet. Several evidence of documentations with regards to the costume and the natural stage of Trunthung Music are provided in Figure 5.

Referring to Figure 5, the performers of Trunthung Music in the 1110th Anniversary of the City of Magelang wear the costumes made from the combination of woven bamboo and batik cloth. In another performance, the costumes of the performers are made of straws and dried leaves as the main materials. This kind of costume can be seen in Figure 6 as follows.

The use of natural materials as part of the performance is one of the evidence that natural always plays a role in every developing art in a region. A study entitled Penciptaan Kostum Kebo-Keboan (Sebuah Inovasi Kostum Pertunjukan Di Luar Acara Ritual) by (Hady, 2016) has found that a costume that has been designed holds the possession of artistic values. These values represent the icon of Banyuwangi, such as a motif, art, and tradition. So, it is no wonder that the costumes that have been worn in the performance of Trunthung Music reflect the condition of the agricultural environment that becomes the main livelihood for the people of Warangan Hamlet.

In Figure 7, the musical instrument performers wear surjan, namely the Javanese formal upper attire for men. Interestingly, Figure 7 shows that the musical
performance’s natural stage is Sembrani Waterfall, located in the Warangan Hamlet. The use of a natural stage in several performances of Trunthung Music becomes the attraction for the discussion on the visual dimension. Several sources from mass media show that nowadays, the development of art festivals has favored the natural stage as the performance decoration. Such use of natural stage can be found in, for example, Dieng Jazz Festival, Festival Lima Gunung, Borobudur International Jazz Festival, and Prambanan Jazz (Khatrunada & Alam, 2019; Lubis, 2020).

The Kinesthetic Dimension in the performance of Trunthung Music can be seen from the movement and the floor pattern that the performers show. Practically, the kinesthetic dimension is related to the movement or the dance that has been created during the performance of the Trunthung Music. It should be noted that at the beginning, Trunthung exists as the accompanying musical instrument for the performance of Soreng Dance. However, when Trunthung is staged as a musical performance, the movement of both Soreng Dance and Topeng Ireng Dance is still highly attached to the performance of the Trunthung Music performance up to date.

Several studies on Soreng Dance and Topeng Ireng Dance show that Trunthung has been the control mechanism for the rhythm of both the movement and the music within every transition that the dancers do (Fitiriasari, 2019; Mumfangati, 2007). However, when Trunthung is staged as a musical performance, several characters belonging to both the Soreng Dance and the Topeng Ireng Dance can still be found among the performers who move around while beating Trunthung. This finding is interesting because the development that Handoko has pursued displays the sonoric dimension and develops the movement patterns that the performers of Trunthung Music show. The finding is shown in Figure 8.

Several characters of Trunthung Music performance that can be found in terms of sonoric dimension are in the form of the beating patterns, which have been con-
templated as the reflection of the cheerful yet energetic peasant life. In this regard, the visual dimension is reflected from the costume to wear. In this costume, the natural materials become the main part and this also includes the use of the natural stage. Sometimes, the use of natural stage becomes a peculiar attraction within the context of art performance. On the contrary, the kinesthetic dimension of Trunthung Music performance is apparent from the movement pattern of both Soreng Dance and Topeng Ireng Dance. Before Trunthung Music is staged as a musical performance, the music used to be the accompaniment to the performance of both Soreng Dance and Topeng Ireng Dance. Therefore, when Trunthung Music is staged as a musical performance, three aspects become a single unity among the performers: the sonoric dimension, the visual dimension, and the kinesthetic dimension.

**Sustainability of Trunthung Music in Magelang**

Trunthung Music is a musical performance that has grown and developed in the middle of the five mountain communities (*Komunitas Lima Gunung*), and the music has been dominated by agricultural life. Therefore, the natural and cultural environment of the people in Warangan Hamlet have a huge influence over the sustainability of Trunthung Music up to date.

The relationship among music, culture, and environment becomes an interesting review when one views the sustainability of Trunthung Music. Without one having ever realized it, this music has shaped its own ecosystem.

With regards to the statement, Handoko has been the local artist from the Warangan Hamlet, and he is one of the members in Komunitas Lima Gunung. Then, one of the art associations in the Warangan Hamlet is Warangan Merbabu Art Studio.

Warangan Merbabu Studio is one of Komunitas Lima Gunung members. Komunitas Lima Gunung is a community that consists of traditional artists. In general, these artists are the Volcano, Merbabu Mountain, Sumbing Mountain, Andong Mountain, and Menoreh Mountain (Adi & Ma’arif, 2020; Aswoyo, 2013; Hakim, 2015; Rukmorini, 2018). Komunitas Lima Gunung is an expression of culture from a village civilization that has enormous power. The peasants from the hamlets that group themselves together in Komunitas Lima Gunung are creative and independent as they don’t rely on anyone else (Aswoyo & Sularso, 2020).

Referring to Figure 9, the discourse of ecology as a method of analysis that puts emphasis on inter-individual relationship and environmental activities and, consequently, individuals always become the focus of analysis within the scope of their relationship with the abiotic, the biotic, and even the social, economic, and cultural (Landoala: 2013). This interaction has shaped a spatial system known as an Ecosystem (Allen & Dawe, 2016; Zurlini et al., 2009). One of the ecosystems that have been shaped from such interaction can be found in the educational process amidst the residents of Magelang.

In the context of education, Handoko has been teaching the traditional art to almost half of the schools throughout the Regency of Magelang. One of the achievements that Handoko has with regards to the teaching of Trunthung Music is the creation of new music in 2011 on SMP Negeri 4 Kota Magelang and this music is known as Klunthung Orchestra. Klunthung Orchestra collaborates Trunthung Music and Angklung Music is always performed in every Anniversary of the City of Magelang. Once, the Klunthung Orchestra was
performed around 2011 in Taman Mini Indonesia Indah as the representative for the City of Magelang over the Pavillion of Central Java.

The development of Trunthung Music in several schools has been one of the ecosystem-forming components that turn the cultural content into one of the media for honing the students’ creativity and appreciation.

The term “ecosystem” refers to a system that has integrated the biotic environment, the abiotic environment, and the interaction between the two environments (Salomon, 2008, p. 1155). In the light of the statement, an ecosystem can be classified based on the physical contexts and components. However, such classification highly depends on the scale of the focus in the study. Then, the term ecosystem itself is a combination of two terms, namely “ecology” and “system,” that was introduced by A.G. Tansley in 1935 for the first time (Christian, 2009; Willis, 1997). The use of the term “ecosystem” was inspired by the same term that Ernst Haeckel had previously introduced.

One of the definitions that have been widely known is proposed by Odum (1969) as follows:

Ecosystem can be defined as any unit that includes all of the organisms in a given area interacting with their physical environment so that a flow of energy leads to exchange of materials between living and non-living parts of the system.

The discussion on the Sustainability of Trunthung Music can be focused on two levels of the subject, namely: (1) Territory Subject (Cultural Characteristics and Geographical Conditions of Komunitas Lima Gunung Environment); and (2) Stakeholder Subject (Community-Based and Government-Based). Despite that, the present study captures several traditional rituals that have been performed in the Warangan Hamlet that involves Trunthung as part of the procession there. For example, Trunthung Music has been used in the procession of Ritual Nyadran Kali, which is shown in Figure 11.

Trunthung Music indirectly becomes the element that should exist whenever the procession of Ritual Nyadra Kali is performed. The reason is that Soreng Dance has been the main requirement for the performance that is directly staged in Puyam Spring, Warangan Hamlet, as discussed by (Lestari, 2016) regarding the procession of Nyadran Kali in Warangan Hamlet.

The art development in the middle of the community becomes an interesting discussion to view art as a cultural product. With regards to the statement, festival becomes one of the cultural products that can disseminate and even preserve an art product in the middle of a community. The statement is supported by the presence of Jaran Sembrani Festival that is held in Warangan Hamlet.

Tapak Jaran Sembrani Festival is one of the art performance sequences that have been held by the Warangan Merbabu Studio and the people of Warangan Hamlet. In some of these performances, the Chief of Komunitas Lima Gunung used to deliver his speech as follows:

(The theme of our festival this year is ‘Village Civilization.’ This theme has been selected to show the world that the traditions in both the villages and the mountains are still in existence despite the pandemic outbreak. Through this theme, we are trying to look for the strength of both nature and the village.)

The statement delivered by the chief of Komunitas Lima Gunung strengthens further that the sustainability of art will not be invented without support from the ecosystem.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of and the discussions within the study, the researcher concludes that Trunthung Music has three interrelated dimensions in its performance: sonoric, visual, and kinesthetic. Both the textual and the contextual interaction with the Trunthung Music form an ecosystem that eventually creates a sustainable condition. The elements that shape the ecosystem of Trunthung Music in Warangan Hamlet are the local artist who serves as the agent that creates the Trunthung Music, the Warangan Merbabu Studio that serves as the medium of art for the people in Warangan Hamlet, and the Komunitas Lima Gunung as the medium of exchanging information with the people outside the Warangan Hamlet. The interaction among these elements can be related to both nature and the individual such as the one that has been found in both the ritual and the art festival that the people of Warangan Hamlet have held.

Despite the significant findings that might have been found within the study, the researcher still deems that the results of the present study have still been unable to capture several elements of Trunthung Music more comprehensively. Therefore, it is expected that future researchers would like to conduct a more in-depth study with regards to the components that form the ecosystem of Trunthung Music.

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