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Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa: A Study of Aesthetic Form, Philosophy, and Utilization in Implementing Educational Values

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Abstrack

The entry of globalization and modernization into Indonesia has gone hand in hand with the emergence of attitudes contrary to Javanese cultural values. Learning media can generate new desires and interests, increase motivation and stimulation of learning activities, and even psychologically affect students. Introducing the philosophy of *gunungan wayang* will be more effective if it is taught at schools. This study aims to describe and analyze how Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa can instill educational values in SMA N 1 Cepiring. The research method used qualitative research with a case study design. The process of collecting data employed observation, interviews, and literature study. According to Miles and Huberman, data reduction, data presentation, and concluding were carried out with three activity lines. The results of this study are in the form of *wayang* creations or specifically the parts of *gunungan*, and they are used to deliver educational messages to the students. The character values instilled in the students are responsibility, curiosity, and honesty. The significance of this research is as an overview of the benefits of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa to instill educational values in students at SMA N 1 Cepiring.

Keywords: Innovation, Learning Media, Gunungan Wayang, Character

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with a diverse culture. We can find various kinds of culture ranging from language, dance, customs, heirloom weapons, house forms, and so on, from Sabang to Merauke. One of the world's seven wonders is in Indonesia, namely the Borobudur temple in Central Java. According to Adrian Snodgrass (in Dharsono (Sony Kartika) 2007:134), Borobudur is the largest Buddhist monument in the world and one of the most amazing creations, a combination of a Buddhist stupa with the idea of a cosmic mountain. However, not only is the Borobudur temple owned by the Indonesian people, but other temples have the same beauty value and are located in Indonesia. They are like the Prambanan temples, Mendhut temples, Dieng temples, Kalasan temples, and many other temples with beauty and diversity of shapes.

The motif of *pohon hayat* (the tree of life) can be found on the relief walls in the temple and several places in the country. It is similar to the tree of life motif found in Gunungan Wayang Kulit, weaving motifs, batik motifs, and others.

The Indonesian ancestors have long known the Gunungan motif. In the Wayang Kulit Purwa performances in Java, gunungan plays an important role, as Hoop (1950:280) pointed out as follows: In the Javanese bajangbajang game, namely the Wajang Kulit game, it is placed in front of a screen (kelir) before and after the game, and also between the acts, something resembling a fan and comes from Central Java. It is called 'gunungan' (mountains) and called 'kekayon.' This mountain symbolizes the number of unity or oneness, and it is the same as the tree of life.

Based on the previous explanation, it is clear that another name for *gunungan* is *pohon hayat*, or the tree of life. Therefore, it is the main element of its complete form. It can be seen that *gunungan* begins with the form of a tree of life, which transforms

into gunungan form. The process of cultural transformation from the tree of life to becoming a gunungan is an exciting thing to study, considering that it is one of the most complicated wayang kulit and has an essential meaning in the world of wayang.

The pohon hayat (tree of life) is the essential element in the gunungan form. The term 'hayat' means alive or life, so pohon hayat means the tree that gives life to all living things. The images that fill the 'kekayon' become the essential part. The main parts of the 'kekayon' image are the hills and the tree, called the Paridiata Tree or Pauh Djanggi (in the literature of the Federation of Malaya). The tree is likened to the Tree of Heaven, the Tree of Magic, the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge (Budi) or Kalpataru, or the Tree of Hope. (Sastroamidjojo: 1964:203-204) Based on the explanation above, it can be seen how a tree means so much to a life that has always been glorified since the days of the Indonesian ancestors. The meaning of a tree as a source of knowledge has long been known. Gunungan is a form of art with a symbolic meaning that can be used as a guide in everyday life.

The greatness of the Wayang Kulit Purwa occurs because of the improvements in various aspects of the arts that have been carried out from time to time and from generation to generation over a long period and have been tested by the times. The attraction of wayang kulit purwa is strong. Therefore, the longer you watch and enjoy it, the more exciting and unforgettable it is, and you will not get bored. In the Wayang Purwa Kulit art, you can find various types of arts that can be enjoyed together, such as widya art (philosophy and education), drama art (performance and kerawitan/music), ripta art (sanggit and literature), gatra art (sculpture and sungging) and creative arts (conceptions and new creations). The elements of art in wayang kulit purwa support and complement each other, so it is possible to accommodate various aspirations.

In the teachings of Islam, it is believed that the depiction of humans and animals is not allowed because it is haram (forbidden). It means that if we carry it out, it is sinful, but if we leave it, we will get a reward. In terms of depiction, the two objects are represented as associating with God. It is something that is forbidden and must be obeyed. In the past, the depiction of humans or animals could lead people astray because the results of the depiction would become the objects of worship. Therefore, that belief has influenced changing the wayang so that it has no more conflicts Islam. with The depiction of wayang is conducted in a stylized style so that the form is different from the source. The face is depicted from the side part, the body is from the front, and the legs are from the side. The hands are made long to touch the toes; the neck is made long with the size of the arm, and so on. Wayang is not a physical depiction of humans but a depiction of human character. The wayang, originally made methok, was obliquely in line with Islamic teachings. The attributes are added to describe the social strata so that the attributes from one group and another are different. Attributes in wayang include kelat bahu (decoration on the arm), kroncong or binggel (ankle

bracelet), praba (decoration located on the back of the king figure, which is a symbol of light), jamang, garuda mungkur, sumping, uncal wastra, konca, makutho, kencana, uncal and dodotan (how to wear cloth). The initially simply drawn parts were inlaid and displayed during this Islamic culture period to make them more ornamental with a high aesthetic value. The characters are added with several types of puppets to make them more complete and exciting for a spectacle. This form of completion is supported by various levels of society, such as the King (ruler) and Islamic religious leaders (wali). Based on the attributes, wayang characters can be divided into three groups, namely raton, which is a group of kings, satria which is a group of figures who dress in the knights' clothing and putren figure groups (female); and bala, which is a group of warriors and a group of *panakawan* (the clown servants of the hero).

METHODS

This study used a qualitative method with a case study design. Qualitative research methods are often referred to as natural methods because the research is carried out in conditions (Sugivono, 2010:8). Meanwhile, a case study is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail, and in-depth regarding a program, event, or activity at the individual, group, institutional, or organizational level to gain in-depth knowledge of the event (Rahardjo, 2017:3). The case study research is included in qualitative research which does not only describe, but also finds the meaning in it (Ratna, 2010: 94). Therefore, this research was conducted and aimed to describe as well as analyze the use of Gunungan of Wayang Kulit Purwa as a medium for instilling educational values to students at SMA N 1 Cepiring.

The data collection technique used observations, interviews, and document studies. The observation technique was conducted by participating in the cultural arts learning at SMA N 1 Cepiring. According to Rohidi (2011:2018), the interview is a technique used by researchers to obtain data and information about events that cannot be observed directly because the event has occurred in the past or the researcher is not allowed to be present in the research field. The document studies were conducted to obtain data and information on previous research on the same topic through books, journals, the internet, and other reference sources.

According to Miles and Huberman, the data analysis method is carried out with three stages, translated by Rohidi (2007: 16), namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The data reduction stage aims to sort out the data to be used and discard the unnecessary data. The data presentation stage refers to the presentation of information arranged to allow the possibility of drawing

conclusions and taking action (Rohidi, 2011:236). The last stage is concluding to formulate the final results of a series of research activities and the qualitative data processing carried out by the researchers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profil SMA N 1 Cepiring Profile of SMA N 1 Cepiring

SMA N 1 Cepiring is located at Sri Agung Street No. 57, Cepiring, Sembung, Cepiring, Kendal sub-district, Central Java, 51352. Its strategic location and close to the north coast make it easy to be accessed by any transportation. Religious and cultural values are the main foundation of student character building. The students are accustomed to understanding and implementing the fardhu (duty) prayer in the congregation. In addition, literacy culture is also continuously taught every morning. Cultural values are instilled to shape the students to become creative human beings.



Figure 1. Art exibition at SMA N 1 Cepiring

In addition, SMA N 1 Cepiring is also one of the cultural-based schools. It is reflected through many art activities inside and outside the school.

Online Learning at SMA N 1 Cepiring

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the learning activities at SMA N 1 Cepiring were conducted online and used the E-Learning application. The learning takes place five days a week, from Monday to Friday. The lesson

schedule during the COVID-19 pandemic is the same as before. However, the duration and type of subjects are determined by the school curriculum, which is four subjects per day with a duration of one hour for each subject. The online learning started at 07.30 and ended at 11.30 WIB.

The policies during the online learning period for teachers of SMA N 1 Cepiring included the work-from-home (WFH) and work-from-office (WFO) policies. The shift schedule for WFH and WFO was conducted every two weeks, and each teacher got their schedule for WFO for one day a week and five days for WFH. In addition, the principal, vice principals, and education staff would also get the same schedule as the teachers. The working days during the COVID-19 pandemic at SMA N 1 Cepiring were five days a week. For teachers who carried out online learning at school, there would be Wi-Fi services provided by the school to support the learning activities. On the other hand, each teacher would also receive a quota subsidy of Rp. 100.000- per month for online learning as a facility to support the learning process.

Study of Aesthetic Forms of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

Gunungan stylistically has three sides in the form of a triangle. It shows a symbol of human life being born in the world through three stages: purwa, madya, and wasana. The word purwa symbolizes kawitan or beginning. It refers to the beginning of humans or is called purwaning dumadi. Since the first meeting of the father and mother, there is the middle or 'madya,' namely the journey of human life that enters childhood to adolescence, adulthood, the heyday of life, having a family, having children, and so on in the cycle of human life. The word wasana or 'final' means that the journey of human life will eventually return to nothingness or emptiness on the side of God Almighty as the single Essence that is indescribable.

Discussing Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa, from its beauty or the basic concept of aesthetics will involve the source of the story or the history of the creation of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa, its structure of visual forms, elements, and types.

History of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

Regarding the history of the growth and development of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa, R. Sutrisno in Agus Purwoko (2013: 19) stated that he relates the history of art concerned with ornamental variety or plant motifs in a prehistoric era. He recognized the symptoms or signs of an older plant decoration before the influence of Hindu, Islamic, Thai, and Chinese ornamental plant decorations, namely the ornamental tree of life in several Dayak tribes and other tribes in Indonesia. Other sources used in tracing the growth of kayon are Serat Rama Sekar Ageng Sikarini and Hikayat Galuh Digantung adaptation of the Panji stories, which is thought to have been composed during the Majapahit kingdom. In the Serat Rama and the saga, there are sentences related to the Nagasari tree, later called Gunungan or Kayon. On that basis, R. Sutrisno expressed his opinion that Gunungan the Kayon or the wayang performance was originally pohon hayat (tree of life), an ancient Indonesian mythological tree, which after the influence of Hinduism changed to the Nagasari tree, and after the arrival of Islam, it was replaced again with the name Kayon or Gunungan until now.

Following the explanation above, kekayon or gunungan is rooted in Hindu culture in India, which has a significant influence in Indonesia. After Islam entered Indonesia, the Hinduism elements survived because of the Wali Sanga in Central Java, who wisely used wayang kulit as a medium for preaching. The term gunungan in Javanese culture is often associated with imitating mountain structures or images resembling a mountain's shape. The definition of gunungan by the Javanese community has been widely known, although in different terms. Physically, Gunungan is a macro form of cone-shaped rice (Sularto, 1993:64). Gunungan is also called kekayon, which is shaped like a leaf decorated with a large tree inhabited by birds and other animals, a picture of a pond, a gate, and all of which are located on top of the mountains. Likewise, the gunungan must be seen as a picture of the 'mountain of all mountains' or Meru from the point of view of Hindu (Soedarso culture Sp, 1991:16). The terms tumpeng, meru, mahameru, kekayon, tree life, kalpataru, sacred of tree. and gunungan have one related meaning. Among all those terms, there is only one basic concept about gunungan: the mountain is the abode of ancestral spirits or the abode of the gods.

The Visual Structure of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

The Development of the Gunungan Form by Sastroamidjojo (1964:203) has explained that the gunungan or kayon can be divided into two types: the developments from the previous shape. There was no gate or roofed house in the first gunungan, and it was still in the form of a pond like the picture below. Therefore, it was called Kayon Blumbangan. The form is considered the initial gunungan form, which is the starting point of the current form. The Kayon Blumbangan, the shape is a bit fat and shorter than Kayon Gauran. At the bottom is a painting of a pond with clear water in the middle and a pair of fish facing each other. In comparison, the background shows a picture of the ocean or sky in blue gradation (Sastroamidjojo, 1964:203). The difference between the three kayon lies in the shape of a pond and house, while the similarity is the form of the tree of life motif still dominates the overall form of gunungan because it is the transformation of the tree of life.

The shape of the *gunungan* resembles the heart. It is related to the term *kayon* and the function of gunungan as a picture of life or the heart of the *wayang*. Before the kayon is plugged into the *pakeliran* (the screen for playing *wayang*), the *wayang* is not alive yet. In

addition to its function as a living picture of *wayang*, the shape of *the gunungan* is also an origin symbol and life purpose, the relationship between humans and creators, and the position of humans in the universe. The following will describe the meaning of the *gunungan* symbol in terms of its visual form according to various sources, which have different opinions and interpretations according to their respective points of view.



Figure 2. Gunungan as a symbol of the three realms

The Elements of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

Gunungan elements are pictures that fill and decorate the gunungan. The elements include:

- 1. A mountain;
- 2. A branched tree with dense leaves, fruiting and flowering;
- 3. Various forest animals, such as peacocks, partridges, monkeys, and chirping birds, perch on tree branches and twigs. There are tigers and bulls under the trees and some kind of ancient animals in the form of cats or magical deer tails like

- crocodiles and snakes wrapped around the tree;
- 4. The land where the tree grows;
- 5. A picture of makara/banaspati, which is a giant head that is visible from the face with the tongue sticking out and attached to the tree trunk, and sometimes the top of the tree has a picture of a one-eyed makara;
- A picture of pond/beji located under the tree and becomes the background for the roof of the gate;
- 7. Lar-laran, or bledhegan that, is a giant winged head with an open mouth;
- 8. A picture of the gate and Gupala/Dwarapala, which are twin giant gate guards armed with swords or bludgeons and shields;
- 9. A mustika that is at the top;
- 10. A picture of the fire on the back side of the wayang gunungan.

Types of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

- 1. Kayon Blumbangan
- 2. Kayon Gapuran
- 3. Gunungan Anoman Obong
- 4. Gunungan Banyumasan Gito
- 5. Gunungan Cirebon
- 6. Gunungan Gapuran Jawa Timur
- 7. Gunungan Gapuran Yogyakarta
- 8. Gunungan Golek Menak
- 9. Gunungan Hakekat
- 10. Gunungan Jagat Gumelar
- 11. Gunungan Kalacakara
- 12. Gunungan Klowong
- 13. Gunungan Sadat
- 14. Gunungan Sekar Jagad
- 15. Gunungan Simbal Sanggar

The Aesthetic Value of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

The term and the notion of beauty no longer have the most important place in aesthetics because it has a double meaning. It also possesses various characteristics and is subjective to express a personal assessment of something pleasant. Value is a psychological reality that must be clearly distinguished from

usefulness because it exists in the human soul and not in the object itself. People believe value can be believed until it is proven true (Dharsono, 8: 2007).

Regarding the variety of values, there is opinion that distinguishes between subjective values and objective values. Another distinction is between individual values and societal values. However, experts' crucia1 value classification differentiating values into extrinsic and intrinsic values. Extrinsic value is the excellent or valuable nature of an object as a tool or means for other things, which is usually referred to as instrumental (contributory) value, the value that plays as a tool or assistant. In comparison, intrinsic value means good or valuable characteristics of something or someone for their interest. It is usually called consummatory values, which refer to the values that have been completed, the values that have achieved the desired goals, generally recognized as intrinsic values, namely truth, goodness, and beauty.

The Philosophy of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

The shape of the *gunungan* is very distinctive, so it is easy to recognize and memorize. It is tapered like a mountain or a cone. Marwoto and R. Budhy Moehanto (1996: 11) argued that it is called gunungan because it looks like mountain that looks solid and authoritative and stands straight. In addition to its distinctive shape, the motifs and pictures are complex and contain broad and deep meanings. The philosophy of gunungan can be reviewed through several aspects, including name or designation, elements, and how they are embedded in the pakeliran.

The Name or Designation of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

Gunungan is also known as "kayon" (wood) or "kekayon". It is related to the picture of wood (trees) contained in the gunungan. The word "kayon" comes from wood and gets the

suffix -an (kayu-an) so that it becomes kayon which in Javanese has the meaning as an imitation of wood/tree.

The word "kayon" is interpreted by some experts as coming from the word khayu or khayun (Arabic), which means life, and kayun in ancient Javanese means will or desire. Poniran Sumarno and Atot Rasona (1983:7) stated that the word "kayon" comes from the Arabic "al Khayu," which means life, or comes from the Kawi language "kayun" which means intention/will. Therefore, the word of kayon has revealed the purpose or intent contained in the wayang form.

The Elements of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa

- 1. Mountain
- 2. Tree
- 3. Animals
- 4. Land
- 5. Makara
- 6. Pool
- 7. Lar-laran
- 8. Gate
- 9. Dwarapala
- 10. Fire
- 11. Mustika

Utilization of Gunungan in Cultivating Educational Values in the Context of Art Education at SMA N 1 Cepiring

Gunungan as a Learning Media

The element of culture that can highlight its distinctiveness and quality is art (Sumintarsih et al., 2012). One traditional art that is becoming less attractive in the current era is wayang. The word wayang comes from the Javanese krama ngoko (the grade of Javanese language, which consists of formal and informal Javanese), which means a face consisting of goods and others exposed to light or lighting (Ismunandar, 1985).

Nowadays, many children are not very familiar with *wayang*. Some of them may never watch it or hear its stories taken from the classic *wayang* stories such as the Mahabharata

or Ramayana, even though its stories contain the character and our local culture. It must be preserved because it is the hallmark of the Indonesian nation. Many children are not interested in learning or knowing their culture, whereas many foreign tourists, such as in wayang or traditional musical instruments, are interested in it.

The current early childhood does not have any idea about *wayang* characters, even though they are very educative. What they know might be about cartoon characters, superheroes, or even soap opera characters. Based on previous research, the reason that makes *wayang* less popular among young people is that the younger generation does not understand the stories told by the *dalang* (puppeteer) and the language used by the dalang (Hidayati, 2014).

Learning Components and Strategies

There are twelve components of education according to P.H. Combs (1968: 78), namely: (1) Goals and Priorities, (2) Students, (3) Teachers or Lecturers, (4) Management, (5) Time Structure Schedule, (6) Contents and **Teaching** Materials, (7) Learning Aids, (8) Facilities, (9) Technology, (10) Quality Control, (11) Research, and (12) Fees (Sutirna, 2019: 33). The components that have been mentioned are aspects that determine the creation of a quality learning process and following the objectives of education.

Introduction of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa Media to Grow Students' Character

The way to introduce the noble culture of wayang to students can be in various ways, including reading wayang books, inviting them to watch the show, coming to the wayang museum, bringing wayang to class, or telling wayang stories. Such conventional methods can be carried out, yet innovation is necessary to be more attractive and exciting to hone the students' imagination and creativity.

Indonesia will never run out of its various culture as long as the earth rotates. It

is what underlies us. In addition, it has poured in the form of wayang stories through media and stories from various creative powers of educators. The function of wayang as media is as a channel of learning information or messages of noble values. To realize the ideas in the form of works, it is necessary to have wayang as learning and playing material for the students. Introducing the philosophy of gunungan wayang will be more effective if it at schools. Ιt taught can through wayang theme activities in cultural arts activities, especially fine arts. Through the art activities, teachers can invite students to draw and get to know the character of gunungan kulit purwa. wayang Then, they make wayang from cardboard or duplex paper. In addition, the wayang they made can be performed in a mini-show produced by the students. The inculcation of the educational values of gunungan wayang in students of SMA N 1 Cepiring is carried out in class XII MIPA 1. The introduction of gunungan wayang begins with showing the gunungan of wayang kulit to the students and explaining its function in wayang performance.



Figure 3. Introduction of Gunungan media to students of SMA N 1 Cepiring

By carrying out several efforts to empower *wayang* performances, it is hoped that our young generations can recognize, understand, and appreciate their own culture and creativity. It is crucial for the formation of national identity and national regeneration. Therefore, national identity is not formed from a foreign culture (as seen in the current

phenomenon of our young generation) but rather from the culture of the environment and oneself.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion in chapter IV regarding the general description of the research located at SMA N 1 Cepiring and the use of Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa as a medium for inculcating educational values in the context of education in learning Arts and Culture, two conclusions have been drawn. First, the personality characteristics that exist within the researchers who are carried out to overcome problems with new ways of dealing with the learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic are shown through the character of independence, curiosity, and interest in new things, as well as openness to continue to develop ourselves. Creativity is the ability of a person to reconstruct their ideas to solve problems, carry out activities, or create something different from what already exists, and it has artistic value and added value. In this case, the researchers have invited the students to develop their imagination and appreciation skills. Second, creativity can be improved by efforts to provide better the teachers' educational services, and it is conducted following the times and according to the demands in the globalization era. Researchers carry out creative learning to convey the meaning and content of the philosophy contained in Gunungan Wayang Kulit Purwa as an educational medium. It is carried out using duplex paper instead of animal skins as the true wayang kulit. Making wayang using duplex paper is considered creative and efficient because the material is easy to obtain. Students are also invited to work together and retell their understanding of the Gunungan philosophy based on their understanding. It is conducted as the researchers apply the principle of learning by doing. The students can learn anytime and anywhere while the learning instills the character values of responsibility, curiosity, and honesty in them

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