# The Representation of Noble Heritage of Javanese Cultural wisdom: A Study of East Java Ludruk

Suprapto<sup>1,2</sup>, Sahid Teguh Widodo<sup>3</sup>, Sarwiji Suwandi<sup>4</sup>, dan Nugraheni Eko Wardani<sup>5</sup> {prapto335@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>}

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral Student of Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, Indonesia
<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Teacher Training and Education STKIP PGRI Ponorogo, Indonesia
<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Cultural Sciences Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, Indonesia
<sup>4</sup> Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, Indonesia
<sup>5</sup> Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Sebelas Maret University Surakarta, Indonesia

Abstract. This research takes the issue representation of the noble heritage of Javanese culture. The appropriate approach for this research is ethnography which is reinforced by hermeneutics and cosmology theory. Techniques of collecting data used were listening and recording. Meanwhile, data analysis was conducted in structured manner, by means of collecting data through translating dialog of Ludruk Budhi Wijaya performers, reducing data, and analysing data and conclusion drawing. This study found Javanese cosmology form through Javanese Mythology form in Kebo Kicak Story of Ludruk Budhi Wijaya. This form was reflected on (a) believing in invisible dimension; (b) spell; (c) Javanese spiritual behaviour; (d) *slametan*; and (e) song (*kidungan*). The representation of Javanese noble character value includes: (a) behavioural ethics and (b) human ethics with God. The conclusion of research was that there were various forms of Javanese mythologies, spiritualties, and cultural values that were interrelated and inseparable from each other. This Javanese culture was used as reference source and self-reflection to balance human mind set and to be in icon of nation and the largest asset to this nation.

Keywords: Ludruk, East Java, Noble, Heritage of Javanese Cultural, mythology

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

Any cultures existing in every region accumulate to create a national culture. For example, *ludruk* (East Java folk theater in which all parts are played by men) is a national culture coming from East Java area. *Ludruk* also belongs to a semi-oral folklore. *Ludruk* lives, develops, and is owned collectively by Javanese ethnic community and bequeathed from generation to the next[1]. Speaking of *ludruk* is inseparable from culture and literary anthropology. Storey in Sudikan defined culture as daily life text and practice[2]. Meanwhile, literary anthropology is an analysis and an understanding on literary works in relation to culture[3] [4];. Stated that both letters and culture present life and most lives consist of social fact of cultural environment affecting it[5].

Many studies have been conducted previously on *ludruk*, anthropology, and culture containing religion, myth, and art. [5] in Frameworks of the mystical in Australian colonial and post-federation Poetry explained the relationship between national or regional poetries and religious mysticism forms. [6] in their study on interrelation between Javanese and Islamic values in a variety of life aspects explained acculturation between Javanese and Islamic cultures. Acculturation between Islam and Javanese culture can evidently result in community's maturity in holding religion and in its literary works.

Conducted a study on Mysticism and Materiality: Pearl and the Theology of Metaphor [7]. Elliot Wolfson's recent analysis on dream and language suggested that metaphor is a linguistic site of a phenomenon called "mysticism". Metaphor in this poetry also suggests the importance of comprehensive materiality to both metaphor and mysticism. [8] in his study entitled Mystical Love Metaphor: A Cognitive Analysis of Sohrab Sepehri's Poetry found that learning mystical metaphor in poetry through conceptual metaphoric theory will provide a clearer perception on ambiguous mystical concept and can give an appropriate explanation on abstract concept mapping based on one concept. [9] in a study on the development of *Ludruk* performing art in Surabaya during 1980-1995 (A Historical Study on Kartolo CS group) discussed about *ludruk* in 1960s and 1980s eras, when this traditional art was still glorious.

Study on humorous esthetical values of ludruk: Dewitt Parker's perspective found that the humorous esthetical principle of *Ludruk* gets significant place in the feeling process based on action freedom and spontaneity. Study addressed the transformation of *ludruk* performance during Sukarno era to Reform era[10]. In Sukarno and Suharto eras, *ludruk* followed government's rule, while in reform era there is a performance reform by raising critique against government and society.

Furthermore, Dumadi investigated *petangan*, a Javanese tradition to name child [11]. *Petangan* plays an important part in Javanese naming tradition in its form, use, and social function in Javanese people. A study on Javanese mythology was also conducted [12]. Entitled Javanese mythology in Indonesian Modern Poetry, focusing mythology on puppet as its reference framework and orientation direction. This study helps the author understands the application of Javanese mythology to literary works.

In addition to being viewed from anthropological perspective, the appeal of *ludruk* culture and letters lies on its cosmology. Cosmology studies origin, structure, and relationship of human and culture to universe, including both macrocosm and microcosm [13]. This cosmology tenet aims to balance human thought in order to get comfortable life both physically and mentally. This view is usually called *manunggaling kawulo lan gusti*, a perspective assuming that human's moral obligation is to achieve harmony with the last power and it is in the last unity that human submits himself as his God's creature[14]. Javanese people's perspective eventually creates culture. And the culture is reflected on Javanese people's trust in belief: myth, symbol, history, art, language, and letters. Javanese people are inseparable from various rules concerning norm, art, law, custom, and other ability and binding habit resulting in an order related to ethics becoming the part of Javanese culture [13]. The content of culture questions the product or symbol attempted; and the effect of culture questions the consequence expected from a cultural process[15]. So, culture is manifested in various myths, taboos, and other oral traditions supporting traditional ideology referring to symbol and norm[16].

Considering the result of several previous studies and elaboration above, noble character tenet and mythology in *ludruk* cultural wisdom have not been studied widely yet. Therefore, this research is important to conduct. *Ludruk* as Javanese culture has peculiarity to study. Diverse believes of Javanese people such as myth, rite, noble character or ethics and others are interesting to study. The title "The Representation of Noble Character Value and Javanese

Mythology in East Java-style Ludruk Budhi Wijaya: A Javanese Cosmological Study" is to provide distinctive interpretation, order, and system to live within society along with nature, other creatures, and God.

## 2. METHOD

This study was a qualitative research with descriptive method, the one focusing on the author's interpretation [17][18]. The appropriate approach for this research is ethnography which is reinforced by hermeneutics theory. Data source of research consisted of audio-visual document of *ludruk* budhi wijaya performance with *Kebo Kicak* story. Overall, the data source of research constituted transcription of *ludruk* performance, result of interview, and library study. Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model encompassing data reduction, data display, and verification [19]. Data validation was carried out using triangulation [2].

# **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The elaboration of myth in Javanese people constitutes a form of culture becoming a distinctive icon. In addition to myth, art and ethic also become Javanese people's self identity. Javanese people's myth is manifested into several forms: (1) Javanese people's trust in invisible dimension, (2) magic formula and spell, (3) Javanese people's spiritual behavior (*laku*), (4) *slametan*, and (5) *tembang* or *kidungan* (song). These myth and belief function as the inculcation of noble character value.

## 3.1 Javanese people's trust in Invisible Dimension

To Javanese people, empirical nature is closely related to meta-empirical nature (invisible nature). They are complementing each other. Sensitivity to invisible dimension of empirical world can be expressed in some ways, for example, in ritual (rite)[14]. Invisible dimension of meta-empirical world is *"ingkang samar, ingkang gaib* (disguised, invisible). The invisible characteristic of nature is manifested into invisible power personified to be spirits. All of natural powers are reverted to disembodied spirits (creatures) and powers. The belief in invisible creatures is represented in *Kebo Kicak* story of ludruk Budhi Wijaya, as cited below:

Pak dhe

:Ora popo. <u>Iki mung mlebu ning kekuatan kang manjing ning sungu. Kebo</u> <u>Kicak, sungumu landepe koyo gaman.</u> Sopo wae sing mbok slamak I marang sungu. Umpamane watu mbok sundal bakal ajur wit bakal tumbang. PD/37/LKK/2018

From the citation above, it can be seen that the traditional Javanese people environment is replete with myth as reflected in East Java *ludruk* with *Kebo Kicak* story. It is a belief that a scarce object has power and if it is put into an individual's body, the one will have superpower. A belief in invisible power, disembodied creature or spirit has been a hereditary tradition and standard in undertaking life. It assumes that human beings live in the world not alone but along with other nature that is always adjacent to the real world. Another citation shows the belief in Javanese mysticism:

Hantang Boyo :weladalah, sopo sing wani mbedah aku sing dadi wujude watu sing ono brantas kene. Heh sopo kon?HB/01/LKK/2018

From the citation above, it can be interpreted that a large stone split can speak and be a disembodied spirit called *lirihboyo*. Therefore, Javanese people believe that large stone and tree are sacred because they contain disembodied spirit that can give them what they want. The places considered as sacred by the people are always taken care with mystic activities, such as burning incense.

## 3.2 Magic Formulas or Spells

Superpower or *kasekten* to Javanese people is a powerful energy that can release heat or light. In traditional Javanese people environment, spells are often used in daily life to make something done running smoothly. It can be seen from the scene when *Kebo Kicak* was inaugurated by his master:

Bismillahirrahmanirrohim, Hamid pasang kaliman tabiq Tinebehno saking tulak sarik, Dumawahing tawang towang Mugi-mugi linepetno saking siku dendhaning gusti angkang maha agung Amin ami ya robal alamin.PD/06/LKK/2018

The citation of spells above is a master's inauguration over his pupil, followed with purifying process. It is conducted to enable the pupil, *Kebo Kicak*, to have high *kanuragan* (esoteric) science so that his journey to look for his father would run smoothly, without any obstacles, and always protected by the Almighty God.

#### 3.3 Javanese People's Spiritual Behavior (Laku)

Fasting tradition is a multipurpose belief. Asceticism is a ritual of alineating (*ngebleng*), while fasting is a *tirakat* by means of eating only a little food (not more than one fist) a day, or even not eating and not drinking at all, and not socializing with others for several days, months, and even years. It can be seen from what was done by *Kakek Joko Tulus* as cited below:

Simbah

:Nganti gugur olehku poso lan topo broto. Rupamu ganteng tapi kelakuanmu koyo kebo. (Amarga simbah wis kadung mangkel, Joko Tulus dikutuk dadi kebo)SB/01/LKK/2018.

From the citation above, there is a ritual behavior of alienating (*ngebleng*) from any thing called fasting and *topo* or *bertapa* (asceticism). This spiritual behavior is the requirement to accomplish the power.

#### 3.4 Slametan

*Slametan* tradition originated from native Javanese culture. *Slametan* derived from word *slamet* (Arabic: Salamah) meaning safe, happy, and tranquil. *Slametan* is a Javanese communal activity usually represented as a ritual party, including ceremony at home and in village. Even in large-scale it includes *tedak siten*, *mantu* (wedding), *slametan* to ward off disaster and etc, aiming to confirm the common cultural order. In addition, it is intended to restrain destroying power (*tolak bala*). From *slametan*, it can be revealed the values felt most deeply by a Javanese person: commonness, neighborhood, and concord [20]. *Slametan* tradition is represented in *Ludruk Kebo Kicak* as cited below.

Pak dhe

sak durunge bopo njaluk pangapuro, njaluk kanti ikhlasing batinmu, supoyo kowe lego legowo kebo utowo banteng tracak kencono tak jaluk, <u>tak gawene</u> <u>slametan qikah neng padepokan pacuran kene.</u>PD/02/LKK/2018

*Slametan* tradition for warding off disaster is conducted to make the people feeling secure from disembodied spirit and *dhanyang*'s disruption. It can be seen from the character of Master Soponyono holding *kikah* (animal slaughtering ritual) as cited above.

#### 3.5 Kidungan

In East Java-style *ludruk* there is *Kidungan*. *Kidungan* means a lyric song depicting a feeling and expression conducted by *pengidung* (singer). Here is the *kidungan* in *Ludruk Kebo Kicak* as cited below.

Mulo kewajibane wong urip ojok dilalekno Ayo madep mantep marang gusti Allah

Sebab wong urip gak luput soko penggudo Mulo onok nglanggar ajaran agomo Awal shodaqoh ayo ditindakno Iku kewjibane wong urip onok ngalam ndonyo

Kito urip piro lawase Umpomo wong mlaku, cumak mampir ngombe .... KD/01/LKK/2018

*Kidungan* above depicts the recent condition by seeing the development of human beings increasingly fulfilling the world. Human beings should not be tempted and break the religious tenet. Human beings live in the world just like "*mampir ngombe* (stopping by to drink)" meaning that living in the world is only very short. It can be concluded from the elaboration of *kidungan* content above implying that *kidungan* aims to give advice that living today should be cautious and not be tempted and always maintain and improve worship to Allah, the Almighty God. *Kidungan* Art can be found in *ludruk* performance only.

#### 3.6 Representation of Javanese People's Noble Character

East-Java style *Ludruk Budhi Wijaya* with *Kebo Kicak* story inserts the problem of Javanese noble character. It is because Javanese noble character or behavior is a product of Javanese people's culture caring about values and norms binding all aspects of human life. In East Javastyle *ludruk*, there are some behaviors represented as follows:

3.6.1 Noble Character of Behaving

An individual's noble character can be seen from the one's behavior; the one behaving well will of course have good character. *Ludruk budhi wijaya* with *Kebo Kicak* story reflects the noble character value of behaving, as cited below.

Simbah :Nganti gugur olehku topo. <u>Rupamu ganteng tapi kelakuanmu koyo kebo</u> (Amarga simbah wis kadung mangkel, Joko Tulus dikutuk dadi kebo. Banjur Wandan Wanguri lan pamane moro nyetuke simbah lan Joko Tulus).SB/01/LKK/2018

From the dialog cited above, it can be seen clearly that the behavior of Joko Tulus figure was less polite because he stepped on an old man who was fasting and in asceticism, so that his asceticism failed. Because of his anger, the old man cursed Joko Tulus, so that Joko Tulus changed into a black figure just like a buffalo (*kerbau*) called *Kebo Kicak*.

3.6.2 Noble Character pertaining to the relationship between Human Beings and God One of Javanese noble characters is the relationship to God: *Gusti Allah iku mung siji*, nanging ing ngendi papan ana, ing badane manungsa uga ana, meaning that God is the only one, but he is anywhere and always oversees every human being's conduct.

This trust in God can be seen in the citation below.

Pak dhe

:Le. Dadine aku gumun. Satasane ibumu wanito kang ayu, terus ndue putro kang koyo kowe. <u>Ning menungso mung sak dermo nglakoni kabeh mau gumantung</u> <u>cinorek ing kodrat kersaning gusti ing akaryo jagad.</u> Sejatine kowe diiris menyang ngarepku ono wigati opo? Pak dhe, Wandan Wanguri lan simbah.PD/08/LKK/2018

The citation above represents the presence of trust in God in *ludruk Kebo Kicak*. It can be seen from the sentence *Ning menungso mung sak dermo nglakoni kabeh mau gumantung cinorek ing kodrat kersaning gusti ing akaryo jagad* meaning that all human beings are only the actors, but everything is dependent on the Almighty God [21].

# 4. CONCLUSION

Considering the result of research on Javanese cosmology form contained in East Java-style *ludruk budhi Wijaya*, the author concludes that there are many Javanese belief myths: believing in the presence of disembodied spirits, inaugurating spell; *slametan* tradition representation; Javanese spiritual behaviour; *kidungan* in ludruk. This theme serves to deliver social critique and advice to human beings. There is also a representation of noble character concerning the relationship with the self, others, and God. In Javanese ethics, human beings are considered more for their behaviour.

### REFERENCES

- [1] T. Davidson, "Frameworks of the mystical in Australian colonial and post-federation poetry," J. Aust. Stud., vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 389–405, 2011.
- [2] N. K. Ratna, Teori, Metode, dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra dari Strukturalisme hingga Postrukturalisme Perspektif Wacana Naratif. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2004.
- [3] N. K. Ratna, Antropologi Sastra. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011.
- [4] M. Ali and M. Kamal, "Interelasi Nilai Jawa dan Islam dalam Berbagai Aspek Kehidupan," Kalam J. Stud. Agama dan Pemikir. Islam, vol. 10, pp. 19–42, 2016.
- [5] K. Harkaway-Krieger, "Mysticism and Materiality: Pearl and the Theology of Metaphor," *Exemplaria*, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 161–180, 2016.
- [6] S. Jaberi, I. Ho-Abdullah, and R. Vengadasamy, "Mystical love metaphors: A cognitive analysis of Sohrab Sepehri's poetry," *GEMA Online J. Lang. Stud.*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 143– 156, 2016.
- [7] F. Rahayu, "Perkembangan Seni Pertunjukan Ludruk di Suabaya Tahun 1980-1995 (Tinjauan Historis Grup Kartolo cs)," vol. 2, no. 2, 2014.
- [8] I. Setiawan, "Transformation of Ludruk Performances: From Political Involvement and State Hegemony To Creative Survival Strategy," *Humaniora*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 187–202, 2014.
- [9] Charmaz K, "Aplikasinya dalam Memajukan Penelitian Keadilan Sosial." .
- [10] A. R. Zaidan, Mitologi Jawa dalam Puisi Indonesia Modern 1950-1970. 1997.

- [11] Janmo Dumadi, *Mikul Dhuwur Mendhem Jero Menyelami Falsafah dan Kosmologi Jawa*. Yogyakarta: Pura Pustaka, 2011.
- [12] F. X. Nadar, "The Prominent Characteristics Of Javanese Culture And Their Reflections In Language Use," vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 168–174, 2007.
- [13] Kuntowijoyo, Budaya dan Masyarakat. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 2006.
- [14] Y. M.H, Falsafah dan Pandangan Hidup Orang Jawa. Yogyakarta: Absolut, 2010.
- [15] Sudikan, "Kearifan Budaya Lokal," p. 2013, 2013.
- [16] R. E. Stake, *Qualitative Research Studying How Things Work*. New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2010.
- [17] N. K. D. & Y. S. Lincoln, *The Sage Handook of Qualitative Research*, Edisi 3. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011.
- [18] F. M. Suseno, Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa Falsafi tentang Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993.
- [19] M. mileles Muller & Huberman, Qualitative data Analysis . An Extended Sourcebook. London: SAGE Publiction, 1992.
- [20] F. M. J. Gramedia and P. Utama, "Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa Falsafi tentang Kebijaksanaan Hidup Jawa," p. 1993, 1993.
- [21] B.W. Setyawan and K. Saddhono, "Eret traditional ceremony as representation of spirit of mutual cooperation among coastal communities". Adv. Sci. Let. vol. 23 no.10, pp 9991-9992, 2017