

The Portrayal of Javanese Women in Waljinah's Selected Songs: A Hermeneutics Study

Tri Murniati¹, Hendri Restuadhi², R. Pujo Handoyo³
{tri.murniati@unsoed.ac.id¹, hendri.restuadhi@unsoed.ac.id², raden.handoyo@unsoed.ac.id³}

Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Purwokerto, Indonesia¹²³

Abstract. This article explores the portrayal of Javanese women in the lyrics of Waljinah's selected songs which were popular in the 60s and 70s namely Walang Kekek (grasshopper), Resepsi (wedding party), and Lelo Ledung (lullaby). It applies hermeneutic method of analysis which enables us to unravel meanings from a written text, such as song lyrics. Therefore, the primary data were taken from Waljinah's selected songs. The secondary data were taken from the literature on Javanese women and society, Javanese songs, and the sociological context when the songs were popular. The results show that the selected songs illustrate Javanese women as active, motherly, and independent indicating noteworthy traits of Javanese women which support the argument that stories on Javanese women are not only stories of the losing party. This article concludes that the selected songs do provide images on Javanese women which in our view, go beyond the era when they were popular.

Keywords: bargaining position, independence, Javanese songs, Walang Kekek

1 Introduction

Accounts on Javanese women often picture them as the losing party. Qurotul Uyun (1) in her article titled "Peran Gender dalam Budaya Jawa," notes 24 roles and duties of women in their household. On the contrary, men are only entitled to 17 roles indicating an imbalanced gender role in the household (1). This underlines the possibility of women experiencing double burden. It means, despite their participation in the public domain, Javanese women are still responsible for fulfilling domestic chores in their household. Indeed, Javanese men are long known as the winning party.

This is in line with Atik Triratnawati (2) who—in her article titled "Konsep Dadi Wong dalam Perspektif Wanita Jawa (The Concept of Dadi Wong in the Perspective of Javanese Women)"—explicates a parameter used to describe the success of a man. A successful man possesses turonggo (horse, a riding animal), kukilo (bird, a hobby), wismo (a house), curigo (a weapon, a skill, or knowledge) and wanito (a woman, a wife) (2). This particular parameter positions women as belongings, completing men's pride. A woman, in this case, is considered equal to a riding animal/vehicle, a hobby, a house, a skill, or knowledge owned by a man.

Nonetheless, the tales of Javanese women are also a tale of victory. In the mind of Javanese people in Yogyakarta, for instance, Nyi Roro Kidul is not only a figure of a queen who reigns the South Sea (the Indian Ocean) but also a guardian to the Kraton Kesultanan Yogyakarta (the kingdom of Yogyakarta). In every coronation of Sultan Hamengkubuwono

(the king of Yogyakarta kingdom), obtaining the queen's blessing is mandatory. The greatness of women in Javanese culture is not merely legend and myth. Eni Juwariyah (3), for example, writes about Ratu Kalinyamat, a great leader who came from Jung Mara (currently Jepara). Juwariyah's book focuses on the queen's leadership.

In a similar vein, Sumanto Al Qurtuby (4) provides a detailed picture of the success of Ratu Kalinyamat in his book titled *Arus Cina-Islam-Jawa* (The Current of China-Islam-Java). Qurtuby (4) notes that during her reign, Ratu Kalinyamat led her forces to Malaka that was occupied by the Portuguese in the year of 1150 and 1574. The forces supporting the queen consisted of approximately 300 ships and 15.000 selected troops. Despite her failure to attack Malaka, Ratu Kalinyamat represents a figure of Javanese woman who is courageous and wealthy, strong characteristics which are usually entitled to men. Further, in his book, Qurtuby also discusses the existence of Ratu Suhita, the 6th leader of Majapahit, one of the biggest kingdoms in Java.

This queen reigned between 1429 to 1447. Ratu Suhita was the granddaughter of Tribhuwana Wijayatunggadewi, the third leader of Majapahit who reigned in 1328 – 1350. Tribhuwana was known as iron woman for her success in leading her troops to eradicate the rebellions in Majapahit. During her reign, the queen had a great left-hand known as Gadjah Mada. In the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, Indonesia had Raden Ajeng (R.A) Kartini, a well-known figure from Jepara. Kartini who is widely known as a leading figure for Indonesian women. One of the greatest Indonesian writers, Pramudya Ananta Toer, immortalizes the greatness of Kartini in his book "Panggil Aku Kartini Saja" (Just Call Me Kartini).

One of the intriguing quotes in his book is a quote from Kartini that said, "I would work harder to make my dream come true, working to elevate the pride and the advancement of our people." This quote displays that despite living in a strong Javanese culture, Kartini tirelessly worked and fought for her people, both men and women. From the stories of Nyi Roro Kidul, Ratu Kalinyamat, Ratu Suhita, Tribhuwana Wijayatunggadewi, and Kartini, it is not fair to say that the tales of Javanese women are merely stories of losing a party. On the contrary, their stories present Javanese women who possessed freedom, independence, strength, and bravery.

From the discussion above, it is clear that history and historical books do record stories of Javanese women and their remarkable traits. This raises a question on how popular culture products such as Javanese songs, for example songs by Waljinah, carry stories on Javanese women. How do the songs tell us about Javanese women?

This article aims at exploring the portrayal of Javanese women in Waljinah's songs. Waljinah is a singer who popularized keroncong from the late 1930s to 1960s. She and other keroncong artists have brought *langgam jawa* and *keroncong beat* "into the realm of mass mediated popular culture" (5).

What makes Waljinah's songs interesting, for instance *Walang Kekek*, is the fact that this song was popular when gender awareness and feminism in Indonesia had not yet developed as it is today. Yet, this song carries caution to men not to undermine women. Skelchy (5) contends that "the song's caveat is if they do so, the risk hardship and suffering later on" (p. 324). To contextualize the portrayal of Javanese women in Waljinah's songs, brief overviews on Javanese society, women, and gender issue, Javanese songs as well as the sociological context of the song are presented. These overviews provide a context, for example, on how Javanese women characteristic is constructed by the society which is used as a lens to examine selected Waljinah's songs.

1.1 Women in Javanese Society and Culture

Discussing Javanese society, Koentjaraningrat (6) argues that one's existence is seen through their activities which reflect their life purpose (p. 38). A research conducted by Ayu Ariyana Mulyani and Wahyu Eridiana (7) which examined suicide phenomenon in Gunung Kidul regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta, found that the doers are mostly elderly who were no longer able to work in the field since their children prefer to work in the city (Wonosari, Yogyakarta). Mulyani and Eridiana's research (7) underlines Koentjaraningrat's argument that one's existence is a direct impact of their daily activities.

In other words, in Javanese perspective, people exist or are recognized when they do certain activities. On the contrary, when they are no longer able to do activities—due to aging or bad health conditions—these people tend to lose their self-esteem. Recognition upon oneself through such activities contributes to shifting the existence of Javanese women nowadays.

Javanese women are bound to their Javanese culture. Triratnawati (2) suggests that Javanese women's life orientation is not only having a successful life in terms of financial security but also a complete and comprehensive amalgamation of materials/physical, morality/religion/ethical and psychological dimensions. Further she emphasizes that the sociocultural dimension bears the greatest point. Thus, to be Javanese woman is to be a figure who understands and is able to apply "unggah-ungguh," or Javanese culture principles.

Examining Serat Candrarini, Indraswari Pikatan (8) finds that Javanese women should possess qualities such as forgiving, faithful, people pleaser, and down to earth (pp. 4-6). Within these traits, Javanese women are constructed as subordinates. A strong patriarchal orientation on Javanese culture leads Javanese women to be shaped to serve men's interests. In such a situation, Javanese women are positioned to be submissive without any freedom and independence.

1.2 Javanese Songs: Development and Awakening

Javanese songs are generally interpreted as lyrical songs in the Javanese language. Interestingly, the music that accompanies them changes all the time. Waljinah and her contemporaries were accompanied by kroncong music, either "pop" keroncong (as in the era of singer-songwriter R. Soetedja and Gesang et al.) or the one equipped with Javanese instruments (langgam). Then in the 1970s "Pop Java" appeared, accompanied by modern music as popularized by Koes Plus band. With the accompaniment of modern music as well, in the 1980s a song called "Gethuk" by Nur Afni Octavia appeared, becoming one of the most favorite songs in the country.

However, "Gethuk" seems to be an anti-climax for the popularity of Javanese songs as a few years after that, they seemed to have disappeared from Indonesian music. In 1993, the creator "Gethuk", Manthous, founded a musical group "Gunung Kidul Maju Lancar" which mixed gamelan with the sound of electric keyboards and bass. This music, called Campursari, quickly caught people's interest. Manthous's efforts made Javanese songs boom again with famous songs like Nyidam Sari, Anting-anting, Gandrung, and Kutut Manggung. In the late 1990s, when Indonesia was hit by the Reformation movement, Didi Kempot emerged with his own song "Stasiun Balapan".

The song became very popular and started a "new era" for Javanese songs which were accompanied by campursari, pop and dangdut music. The re-popularity of Javanese songs also kept Waljinah on the map as she embraced campursari apart from her kroncong and langgam root.

1.3 Socio-Political Context of the Songs of Waljinah

The Javanese songs sung by Waljinah emerged and became popular in the mid-1960s to 1970s. Indonesian pop music at that time was dominated by solo singers such as Titiok Sandhora, Ernie Djohan, Tetty Kadi, Ana Manthovani, Alvian, Oni Surjono, Rachmat Kartolo, and bands such as Dara Puspita and Koes Brothers. Meanwhile, western music also entered Indonesia with hits from The Everly Brothers, The Beatles, The Bee Gees, Elvis Presley, Tom Jones. Most of the songs talked about the relationship between women and men: attraction, romantic relationship, yearning, and also differences in social class between lovers.

Meanwhile, Indonesian politics is undergoing a revolution: a change of regime from Soekarno (Old Order) to Suharto (New Order). Indonesian political stance was trying to be Non-Aligned (at that time, the world was divided into two major powers: The Eastern Bloc led by the Soviet Union and the Republic of China, and the Western Bloc led by the United States) and trying to unite the ideological-political forces which were in power at that time, namely nationalism, religionism and communism. The first president, Sukarno, was more inclined to socialism.

Meanwhile his predecessor, Suharto, was more inclined to the Western Bloc so he tried to develop democracy and liberalism. Consequently, the early New Order era was greatly assisted by America and its allies through the entry of investors and political advisers to Indonesian infrastructure.

The political developments at that time were soon followed by social changes in the lives of Indonesian people. In fashion, for example, pants changed from 'pencil' to "cut-bray" style, from "Syahrir" model clothes (short sleeves with pleats sewn at the ends of the sleeves, popularized by Prime Minister Syahrir) changed into long sleeves with a large collar. Also, during political changes in this era, there were many rumors of "cutting" miniskirts on the streets in which wearers of miniskirts were stopped and then the bottom fold was forcefully unsewn to make the skirt appear longer.

Television sets also became popular in this era despite people's economy. Those who could not afford television would flock to public places where TV was available. Nonetheless, radio sets – which had existed long before – remained popular well into the early 1990s. In that era, the government's radio stations (RRI) were built across the country, followed by many private radio stations established in various cities.

2 Method

In this article, selected Waljinah's songs namely Walang Kekek (Grasshopper), Lelo Ledung (Lullaby) and Resepsi (Wedding Party) are taken as the primary data. The song lyric is taken as a text which, according to Ian Hodder quoted in Denzin (9) is a mute evidence. This means, it will not bear meaning unless we attach meaning onto it through interpretation. The secondary data are taken from the literature on Javanese women in Javanese culture and society, Waljinah's songs and the sociological context of the society when the songs were popular. These literatures serve as a lens to interpret the song lyric using hermeneutics as the method.

Quoting Eberhart and Pieper, Dowling (10) in her exploration on hermeneutics explains that hermeneutics takes "its origin in the 17th century when it was introduced as a method for biblical and classical literary interpretation to illuminate the meaning of the text" (p. 7). Dowling (10) further explicates two central positions in Gadamer's hermeneutics. These are

prejudgments and universality. Quoting Ray, Dowling (10) elucidates that the term prejudice refers to “one’s preconceptions or prejudices or horizon of meaning that are part of our linguistic experience and that make understanding possible” (p. 9). Meanwhile, the term universality discusses “the persons who express themselves and the persons who understand are connected by a common human consciousness, which makes understanding possible” (10).

In the process of interpreting the text, the understanding according to Dowling quoted Spencer, “is derived from personal involvement by the researcher in reciprocal processes on interpretation that are inextricably related with one’s being-in-the-world” (10). This underlines Gadamer’s two central positions which are prejudice and universality. Therefore, Dowling adds, Gadamerian hermeneutics emerges as “dialogue rather than individual phenomenology and interpretation permeates every activity, with the researcher considering social, cultural and gender implications” (10).

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Women in Selected Waljinah’s Songs

This article discusses 3 (three) Javanese songs by Waljinah. As explained in the previous section, these songs were popular in the late 1960s when there was a revolutionary change in the leadership from Soekarno, the first president of Indonesia, to Soeharto. When a song is made and recorded, many things are taken into consideration such as the voice character of the singer, the arrangement of the song, and the match between the singer’s personality and the lyrics. The market was also important. The song "Genjer-genjer", for instance, was sung and popularized by Bing Slamet and Lilis Suryani in the early 60s.

At that time, the song was considered a representation of impoverished people who were forced to eat genjer (yellow velvetleaf) for daily food. However, after the G30S/PKI (Communist Party Movement of September 30th) incident broke out, the song was banned by the Suharto administration because it was considered a communism song. At almost the same time (prior to the incident) the Koes Bersaudara band members were taken to prison because their Beatles-influenced music was accused of popularizing new colonialism. These events show that a song – as well as music – not only reflects the character of the singer but also represents the socio-cultural-political context of the community.

Thus, a song can be interpreted to describe one’s perspective of the world around him/her. In relation to Gadamerian hermeneutics analysis, the interpretation made represents a dialogue which considers the implication of social, cultural and gender (10). The Javanese songs popularized by Waljinah, therefore, presumably contained some reflections of herself as Javanese woman. Waljinah was born in Surakarta (Central Java) and spent her entire life in the region. The song "Walang Kekek" (grasshopper) which she wrote and sang in the late 1960s became her trademark: "Walang Kekek is Waljinah, Waljinah is Walang Kekek". Waljinah achieved fame after releasing this legendary song, Walang Kekek.

The song, which she wrote herself, catapulted her career and made her nicknamed "the Queen of Keroncong". This is in line with Skelchy (5) who notes that “since the 1960s, the name Waljinah has been synonymous with the hit song “Walang Kekek” (p.324). In her songs, Waljinah sees her world from the perspective of a Javanese woman. The three songs selected in this study reflect her views as a Javanese woman on the roles and positions of women. They are “Walang Kekek”, “Lela Ledung” and “Resepsi”. Below information contains some details on the selected song discussed in this article.

Table 1. The list of Selected Waljinah’s Songs

No	Song titles	Songwriters	Released Date/Year
1	Walang Kekek	Waljinah	1968
2	Lelo Ledung	Markasan	1971
3	Resepsi	S. Darmanto	1967

Walang Kekek, as previously mentioned, serves as a warning to men. This particular song reflects Waljinah’s personal experience of “growing up in a polygamous marriage” (5). Skelchy (5) in the absence of her father” (p. 324). Skelchy’s observation (5) underlines the argument that a song is not merely a free entity. The title Walang Kekek is already serving as a metaphor. Skelchy (5) argues that “Walang Kekek draws on an allegory of a grasshopper bounding from places to places as a warning for men not to wander from their wives, girlfriends, and significant others” (p. 324). This warning is vividly seen in the stanza below:

Table 2. Walang Kekek (Grasshopper)

Walang kekek, menclok nang tenggok Mabur maneh, menclok nang pari Ojo ngenyek yo mas, karo wong wedho Yen ditinggal lungo, setengah mati	Grasshopper perched on a basket. Fly off again into the rice paddy. Don’t belittle me with other women. If later you are left, you’ll suffer the hardships.
---	--

From the quote above, the first two lines underscore the metaphor, taking men and grasshoppers as sharing similarity of wandering around. While the next two lines indicate the caveat that men should never undermine women because without women, men will suffer. This resonates well with the view of Javanese women as *kanca wingking*. As taking care of the house is usually managed by women, most men find them not accustomed to managing the house. Thus, they might not be able to manage it well. On the contrary, some women find it easy to switch the role of breadwinner.

However, this does not necessarily mean that she also simultaneously gains power in her household. One biography study on Javanese traditional snack sellers conducted by Dhyan Novita (11), among other things, unravels the complexity of imbalanced gender roles in everyday life which oftentimes are seen as merely petty things. The wife—the snack seller—is the breadwinner in her family. She works as a cleaning lady (in a household and an office) and a snack seller. Every day, the wife starts working at 8 am and returns home at dawn. Meanwhile, her husband is unemployed. Once, this couple had an argument over ‘cigarette money.’ The husband was angry toward her wife for arguing over things like ‘cigarette money.’ Most people consider this as a petty thing in a household.

However, this indicates the imbalanced power relation in a household the ways in which the husband, though he is unemployed, still holds ‘power’ over his wife who is the main breadwinner. The dominant view operates in a Javanese society commonly regards a husband as the one who is dominant in the household and deserves power over his wife. The case of the snack seller and his husband illustrates the fact that despite being a main breadwinner, a wife does not necessarily hold power in the household.

The story illustrated above is a common reality upon Javanese women. According to Fananle quoted in Uyun (1), Javanese women were considered ‘*kanca wingking*’ (domestic partners) until the 18th century. This particular term underlines women’s roles in the domestic domain. Women are responsible for managing any activities in the domestic sphere such as cooking and cleaning. On the contrary, the men are occupying the public domain of the

household which centres in certain parts of the house like the living room and the terrace. Men are also responsible for representing the family.

Nonetheless, this does mean that this idea of women as ‘kanca wingking’ applies in every sphere of the Javanese society. In a different location, such as in Banyumas, a regency in the south part of Central Java, women are not positioned as ‘kanca wingking’ simply because these women are working abroad, thousands of miles away from home. For some men in Banyumas, their wives are taken as ‘batir’ (friend, partner) (12). ‘Batir’ in Banyumas Javanese means a trusted friend. Such a friend is reliable and dependable. For those men, their wives are ‘partners’ in their lives.

The above discussion, to a certain degree, illustrates the ability of women to adapt to any situation. They can easily manage themselves to be responsible for domestic chores and at the Walang Kekek, especially in the last two lines as quoted in the following:

Table 3. Walang Kekek (Grasshopper)

Walang kekek, walange kayu Walang kayu, tibo neng lemah Yen kepingin yo mas, arep melu aku Yen mung trimo, tak kon jogo ngomah	Grasshopper, wood grasshopper Wood grasshopper lands on the ground If you want to, you can follow me If you accept this, then I say you must take care of the house
---	--

In addition, this song is unique because the lyrics talk about women's independence and their bargaining power against men. In the 1960s, the midst of frenetic political changes dominated by men, women's existence and roles were barely visible. Political and ideological changes at that time were very male in character. Women seem to be in a ‘safe’ place, i.e., in the house, not on the streets or even in the living rooms.

The presence of Walang Kekek, thus, can be seen as a woman's scream in the midst of the frenzy. Waljinah was unaware that in other parts of the world, such as the United States, women from various races raised flags and posters shouting liberation and freedom for women during the Women Liberation Movement. Waljinah also never knew James Brown, a black American singer nicknamed the King of Soul, who in 1966 shouted in his song “it's a man man's world, but it would be nothing without a woman or a girl”.

However, through Walang Kekek, Waljinah wittingly offered men roles and positions in the domestic sphere and let women take the main responsibility for the family. As if agreeing with the lyrics of James Brown's song quoted above, Walang Kekek said that the world would never be the same if women left men. Surely, in the era ruled by patriarchal power, this song was a breakthrough. Walang Kekek does not confront male-dominated culture, instead it provides alternatives and challenges for men to appreciate the significance of women's roles and power. Walang Kekek is a soft, hard-line feminist voice which intends to change the “man's man's world” into “woman's woman's world”.

Waljinah's other songs, however, are equally interesting and unique. In her songs, Lelo Ledung and Resepsi, Waljinah talks about the domestic role of women. Lelo Ledung is a kind of lullaby to send children to sleep. In the area around Surakarta in the late 1960s, many women would send their children to sleep while singing the song, “tak lelo lelo lelo ledung” (hush baby, hush). The following is the lyrics of Lelo Ledung.

Table 4. Lelo Ledung (Lullaby)

Tak lelo...lelo...lelo ledung... Cep menenga, aja pijer nangis Anakku sing ayu rupane	Tak lelo...lelo...lelo ledung (Hush baby hush...) Stop wailing, stop crying My beautiful baby
---	---

<p>Yen nangis ndak ilang ayune Tak gadhang bisa urip mulya Dadiyo wanita utama Ngluhurke asmane wong tuwo Dadiyo pendekaring bangsa...</p> <p>Wis cep menenga...anakku... Kae.. mbulane ndadari Kaya buta nggegilani Lagi nggolekki cah nangis..</p> <p>Tak lelo...lelo...lelo ledung... Enggal menengo yo cah ayu Tak emban slendang batik kawung Yen nangis mundak ibu bingung</p>	<p>If you cry, you'll lose your beauty I hope you have a good life Be a great woman Bring a good name to your parents Be a hero for this country</p> <p>Stop crying my dear Look, it's a full moon Like a terrifying giant Searching for crying babies</p> <p>Hush baby hush Stop crying my beautiful baby I carry you in a batik sling If you keep crying, I'll be confused</p>
--	--

From the above quote, women's role on child rearing is underlined. Most people in our society believe that it is women's duty to take care of the children, though this particular view has evolved over time. The song Lelo Ledung is using a mother's point of view which is seen from the last line of the song "Yen nangis mundak ibu bingung" (If you keep crying, I'll be (mother) confused). This underlines a role that is commonly entitled to mothers. This particular song also presents all-female characters, the mother and the baby.

The mother is holding a baby girl as seen in the first stanza where Waljinah mentions: "anakku sing ayu rupane; yen nangis ndak ilang ayune" (My beautiful baby; If you cry, you'll lose your beauty) and she strengthens it in the second stanza as she says: "dadiyo wanita utama" (be a great woman). The song lyric adds a different nuance as the speaker (the mother) expresses her hope that her baby girl will become a great woman who brings a good name to her family and country indicating that it is not only boys who have the opportunity to represent family and country, but women also share similar opportunities.

Through the song, Waljinah emphasizes the domestic role of women at home, i.e. taking care of children. Surely, the role of women in the house is not only to take care of children but also to ensure that all family members have their basic needs met. These domestic roles can be transferred to the public arena when people are having a party or a celebration. It is women who play a major role in managing and organizing events as depicted in Waljinah's song entitled Resepsi (Wedding party/reception). A reception is defined as an official meeting (banquet) held to entertain guests (at weddings, inauguration).

Resepsi describes the situation at a party in which the guests look well-dressed and neat: the men look dashing, and the women look beautiful with accessories adorning their fancy dress. This means, a particular occasion such as a wedding party, both men and women are given similar space, the public space. In this song, a wedding party symbolizes a common ground where men and women are sitting together. To a certain degree, this space also provides contestation ground as the guests (both men and women) as well as the one holding the party (both men and women) are competing to show others their best (in terms of physical appearance).

This can be seen in the following lyrics:

Table 5. Resepsi (Wedding Party)

<p>Yen pinuju angrawuhi ing malem resepsi Kakung putri ngagem busono kang edipeni Poru putri sami lenggah jejer katon rapi</p>	<p>When attending a wedding party Men and women dress up nicely The women sit in a row neatly</p>
--	---

<p>Yen sinawang nganti koyo kontes widodari</p> <p>Poro priyo lenggahe rodo adoh sak wetoro Uthak uthik lirak lirik Ngguya ngguyu Mesam mesem</p> <p>Sajak arep mundut lagu (<i>pengin nyanyi</i>) Sinten niku, lenggah pojok ndelik ono mburi Menga-mengo sajake kok ono sing diwedeni</p>	<p>Like they are in a beauty contest</p> <p>The men sit at a distance for a while Sitting restlessly, glancing over Laughing Smiling Like they want to sing Who are you, sitting in the corner, hiding Looking around nervously like he fears of something</p>
--	--

In the above quote, it is clearly seen that a wedding party or reception is a moment when both men and women occupy equal and similar space, a public space as seen in “when attending a wedding party; men and women dress up nicely.” These two lines highlight an occasion which accommodates both genders to be equal, not divided by the designated gender space which places men in the public sphere and women in the domestic sphere. Wedding parties have emerged as a common ground for both men and women.

In addition, this event requires the attendees [and the hosts] to present their best appearance. Waljinah emphasizes this when she says, “Poro putri sami lenggah jejer katon rapi; yen sinawang nganti koyok kontes widodari” (the women sit in a row neatly as if they are in a beauty contest). Interestingly, the second stanza, which talks about male attendees, describes the men not as confident as the women. The lyric illustrates that the men sit restlessly, glancing over, laughing and smiling. It is not clear why they are described in that particular way. However, the last two lines heighten this insecurity of men in such a public space.

Both songs, Lelo Ledung and Resepsi, do portray women as the one responsible for both domestic and public sphere. This means, Javanese women do occupy both spaces and are capable of managing them well. Waljinah songs, in this case, are able to illustrate different positions of Javanese women in multiple spaces underlining their fluidity of occupying and managing various spaces.

4 Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that the selected Javanese songs popularized by Waljinah have portrayed noteworthy traits of Javanese women which support the argument that stories on Javanese women are not only stories of the losing party. As a song which was a hit in the 1960s, Walang Kekek brings a different nuance because of the spirit it carries, the freedom and independence of a woman. This quality, in particular, reflects the songwriter’s personal experience, Waljinah, which grew up watching her mother struggled in a polygamous marriage. The lyrics of Walang Kekek implies women’s independence, meaning that they do not rely on men. This can be further interpreted that the song signifies that a woman is able to possess a higher bargaining position toward men.

The other two songs—Lelo Ledung and Resepsi—which were released in 1971 and 1967, to a certain degree, are connected thematically by bringing the figure of woman in the song framework, illuminating women’s fluidity of taking both domestic and public roles. Compared to Walang Kekek which implies the dynamics of men and women relationship, Lelo Ledung

and Resepsi bring out the issue of typical roles Javanese women commonly take in daily life, active and motherly. Based on the discussion of the three songs, Waljinah's songs do provide images on Javanese women which in our view, go beyond the era when they were popular.

References

- [1] Uyun Q. Peran Gender dalam Budaya Jawa. *Psikologika J Pemikir dan Penelit Psikol.* 2002;7(13).
- [2] Triratnawati A. Konsep Dadi Wong Menurut Pandangan Wanita Jawa. *Humaniora* [Internet]. 2005;17(3):300–11. Available from: <https://journal.ugm.ac.id/jurnal-humaniora/article/view/855>
- [3] Juwariyah E. Strategi Kepemimpinan Ratu Kalinyamat di Jepara Jawa Tengah Tahun 1549-1579 [Internet]. UIN SUKA; 2017. Available from: <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/28927/>
- [4] Qurtuby S Al. Arus Cina-Islam-Jawa : bongkar sejarah atas peranan Tionghoa dalam penyebaran agama Islam di Nusantara abad XV & XVI. 2003;311.
- [5] Skelchy R. If There are Stars in the Sky: Waldjinah and Keroncong in Postcolonial Indonesia. UC Riverside; 2015.
- [6] Koentjaraningrat. . *Kebudayaan Mentalitet dan Pembangunan*. PT. Gramedia; 2015. 163 p.
- [7] Mulyani, Ayu Ariana; Eridiana W. Faktor-faktor yang melatarbelakangi Fenomena Bunuh Diri di Gunungkidul. *Sosietas J Pendidik Sociol.* 2018;8(2).
- [8] Pikatan I. *Ajaran-Ajaran Berumah Tangga Candrarini Karya Ranggawarsita*. 2012;
- [9] Denzin N. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*[1]. Vol. 1, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*. 2006. 57–59 p.
- [10] Dowling M. Hermeneutics: An Exploration. *Nurse Res.* 2004;11(4):30–9.
- [11] Novita D. *Potret Perjuangan Seorang Perempuan (Life History Seorang Perempuan, Istri, Ibu Rumah tangga, Dan Penjaja Tenongan)*. 2011;
- [12] Restuadhi H. *Suami Buruh Migran, antara Hasrat Seksual dan HIV/AIDS*. Purwokerto: Penerbit Tanah Air Beta; 2016.