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Implementation of a Masked Wayang Performance in Soneyan Village

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Abstract: This research was conducted to find out the history of wayang mask performances and how wayang mask is carried out in Des Soneyan to ensure that the people of Soneyan Village still maintain and preserve the traditions of their ancestors, which are still held today. The method used in this research is qualitative. The data sources obtained from this research were observations of the informants concerned and field trials during the performance of the wayang mask in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet. Data collection uses observation, interviews, and documentation. This wayang mask performance is a tradition still preserved by the residents of Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet. The main discussion points are research on the history of wayang mask performances and the sequence of procedures for performing wayang masks in Soneyan Village.

Keywords: Culture, Performances, Masked Puppets

Abstrak: Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui sejarah pertunjukan wayang topeng dan bagaimana pelaksanaan pertunjukan wayang topeng di Desa Soneyan agar masyarakat Desa Soneyan tetap menjaga dan melestarikan adat istiadat leluhur yang masih dipegang hingga saat ini. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif. Sumber data yang diperoleh dari penelitian ini adalah hasil observasi terhadap informan terkait dan uji coba lapangan saat pementasan wayang topeng di Desa Soneyan Dusun Kedungpanjang. Pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Pertunjukan wayang topeng ini merupakan tradisi yang masih dilestarikan oleh warga Desa Soneyan Dusun Kedungpanjang. Pokok bahasan penelitian ini adalah sejarah pertunjukan wayang topeng dan urutan tata cara pementasan wayang topeng di Desa Soneyan.

Kata Kunci: Budaya, Pertunjukan, Wayang Topeng

1. Introduction

Culture is a concept that is alive to be interested in human ways such as learning to think, having feelings. Believing in, and seeking an appropriate method according to behavior and social phenomena that describe human identity and the image of a society. Culture is the whole complex of knowledge, beliefs, customs, and everything abilities or habits acquired by a person as a member of society, Community culture is often called civilization. Regional culture which is the same as the concept of ethnicity, a culture cannot be separated from patterns community activities (Nugraheni & Haryadi, 2021). Culture is explained as a way of life that is passed down from generation to generation or is transferred from one generation to another through shared learning processes. In order for culture to become values that can survive, there must be a process of cultural internalization. Cultural internalization in question is the process of instilling and developing a cultural value to become part of a person's self. Folklore is oral literature as literature as an expression of literature and community culture which is spread by word of mouth. Folklore is a form of traditional culture, because it is folklore including one type of oral literature. Oral literature is interpreted as literature that includes the literary expressions of citizens and culture that is spread through speech (Srimawirya et al., 2021).

Culture becomes values that can survive, culture in which there is a process of cultural internalization. Internalization in this case is explained as the process of instilling and developing a value or part of the person concerned.

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The instillation and development of these values is carried out through various didactics and educational and teaching methods. The process of cultural formation consists of sub-processes such as cultural contact, cultural exploration, cultural selection, cultural consolidation, cultural socialization, cultural internalization, cultural change, cultural inheritance that occurs and is continuously connected to the environment. Literary works contain a mandate and character education so that they can shape human character in the millennial era. Through these literary works, children can emulate the good values in the stories (Nugraheni & Haryadi, 2021). Traditions contain independent character values, as they exist in the story of the mask puppet performance in Soneyan Village. Folklore has values of independence in the form of work hard and never give up in work or in trying to achieve something targeted or desired. Relating to positive values and constructiveness contained in folklore, then folklore is the material is very appropriate to be used as material for studying literature.

Cultural values in the form of human wisdom in managing nature that is what was then believed is the most effective way in managing nature. One of a form of local intelligence of indigenous peoples shown by making a forest as a sacred place. Folk tales are passed down by word of mouth. This is in accordance with the opinion of that folklore is basically spread orally (by word of mouth), is traditional and is passed down from generation to generation. Folklore is a genre of oral literature. A literary work that is popular in the world. Literary works have a distinctive characteristic, namely long and complex stories. The novel is hundreds of pages long with several themes and topics (Nisa et al., 2020). Traditions are customs passed down from ancient ancestors which is still implemented in society. Tradition is something that is done for a long time and have become part of people's lives, traditions that already exist in a society are very closely intertwined. This, can be referred to as a society that upholds noble values in tradition. Art education in children is not only seen and judged from the results, but also must provide meaning and experience including possible aesthetic experiences accepted by the child during the process. One of the goals of fine arts education is to foster children's creative potential (Nafisa et al., 2021). Parenting patterns are appreciated by children as an invitation, help, guidance and encouragement to shape him to develop himself as a person character. Therefore, it is understandable there is a relationship between parenting patterns with the formation of children's characters, one of which is religious character (Fimansyah, 2019).

Values include something that is desired so that it gives rise to action in a person. Viewed from the perspective of privilege, value is what is appreciated, valued highly, or appreciated as something good. The opposite of a positive value is a negative or valueless value. Value is a measuring concept related to good and bad, beautiful and ugly, right and wrong, fair and pious (Al Mabruroh et al., 2020). Puppetry can appear closely related to the worship of ancestral spirits called hyang. This spirit is respected and worshiped with a form of shadow performance which aims to always protect it. Wayang is a Javanese culture that already exists and is known by the public. These shadows are known as wayang performances because Hindu culture was very influential in Java. In spreading Hinduism on the island of Java, the Brahmins used the Ramayana and Mahabaratha books so that the people of Java knew these books. Wayang stories first told of the adventures and heroism of ancestors, then were transferred to the Mahabarata and Ramayana stories.

Even though character education is not entirely the responsibility of educational institutions, in higher education it has a very important role in shaping the character of students. With literature-based education, students will be taught how to humanize humans. In literature, students will also encounter fairy tales, sagas, spells, poetry, novels and dramas. However, this research only focuses on character formation in a drama performance as a means of control in society. One form of literary work that we want to research is drama (Nugraheni & Ahsin, 2020). The wayang rubric is synonymous with Javanese culture. Even in the current era, the use of wayang characters is often used as a means of reflection and example for society. As a traditional art form, it is a local product and is always interesting in local media. The function of the wayang is to preserve local culture, especially Javanese society, to make it national culture because the values contained in wayang are very complex. Puppets can also provide important information related to the aesthetic life of past societies. Wayang is also used as a channel for public entertainment in general and can be accepted by society at large because wayang stories contain the moral values of life.

The puppet used as a learning medium in this research is wayang beber. This is because wayang beber is the oldest or first wayang in Indonesia (Nisa et al., 2020). Wayang Mask is a type of wayang wong. Wayang wong are wayang people who can play a role in wayang performances, usually these wayang wong are people wearing certain costumes. However, according to the definition of wayang mask, wayang wong wears a costume and a mask to cover his face. Wayang Orang Mask is a puppet that uses tools (masks) made from forest kapok wood and candlenut wood, then sungging, then given a golden color to make it appear alive, so that it is not much different from shadow puppets. In line with Kanzunnudin (2023), that folklore is closely related to local identity, such as circumstances, natural environment, habits or traditions of the story owner. This mask puppetry has been passed down from generation to generation. The wayang mask performance in its presentation consists of elements of dialogue, story, theme, dancers, movement, clothing and music. In the Mataram era, mask performances spread throughout the coast, including the northern coast, as well as the western and eastern parts of the Kejawen region.

The wayang tradition is a fundamental to Javanese cultural heritage and various theatre like puppet types has been known for its centuries. Among these sutradaras, masked wayang performances continue to exist in some villages of Central Java. Section 1: Introduction. The masked wayang (puppet theatre) tradition presented in this ethnographic case study is from Soneyan village, the hamlet of Kedungpanjang, of the Margoyoso sub-district, in the Pati Regency. The

dance story is one of the annually performed mask dance wayang Soneyan which functions in rituality to the agriculture times and its circle. This study seeks to record the specific stylistic traits of that local tradition, its history, structure and performance elements and to comprehend its place in the socio-cultural life of the village community.

Previous studies have shown the symbolic and ritual dimensions of Javanese masked dance and puppet theatre (Foley, 2016; Hughes-Freeland, 2008; Howe, 1987). sYet there are few detailed studies of specific village-level instantiations of these traditions. We provide a detailed ethnography through our focus on the masked wayang of Soneyan village to broaden our understanding of the complexity of Javanese performing arts. Specifically, the study addresses the following issues: 1) what are the antecedents and historical trajectory of masked wayang performance in Soneyan village? 2) How it is organized and what are the foundational elements 3, and 3) How does this tradition shape the meaning and function of this tradition in the daily and ritual life of the community?

Field research was conducted among the participants of the annual masked wayang, as well as interviews and participant observation from performing artists and local elders and available documented narratives. The subsequent sections describe the cultural historical context (Part I), the ethnographic observation and interpretation (Part II-III) and the socio-cultural analysis (Part IV-V), showing that the Soneyan masked wayang has become a key medium for the re-enchantment of established sociality and shared values concerning agrarianization. This introduction sets the study apart from the existing literature on Javanese wayang and mask traditions, locates the research in a single local context, defines the main inquiry, and provides a sense of the ethnographic method and results. But it leads the reader straight into the body of the story.

2. Methodology

This research uses qualitative research. Researchers must dig up information from various data and collect topics regarding the research being conducted so as to obtain data that can be described in the form of written or spoken words. Qualitative research is a research method based on philosophy or the assumption that social reality becomes empirical data in observation (Sugiyono, 2013). Meanwhile, according to Qualitative research is research that has the aim of understanding the events experienced by research subjects as a whole and by describing word forms and language, in a specific context and utilizing various scientific methods. This research was carried out by going into the field to obtain valid data results. Qualitative research also produces descriptive data related to words, images, and not numbers (Arnolia et al., 2021). Researchers carry out data, processes and analysis, and finally draw conclusions from various competent sources. The informant taken from this research was not just one informant, but several informants so that the data taken and obtained matched what happened in the field. Ethnographic research is research that obtains a general overview of the research subject. This research refers to aspects of photographing individuals' daily experiences by means of observation and interviews with local sources in certain situations. Data is an important part of research that cannot be separated, because passing data is the main thing in research. Data is divided into two, covering (1) primary data and (2) secondary data. Primary data is main data obtained directly from the source, while secondary data is obtained indirectly or intermediary. Primary data is the main data that will be processed (Almulla, 2020). Therefore, the primary data for this research is in the form of quoted sentences containing social and cultural values in the novel Samudra Pasai by Putra Gara. Secondary data is non-main data that supports primary data in research. Secondary data from this research comes from articles, books and e-books that are relevant to the research in order to strengthen and complement the research results. Data sources were obtained from several informants, including village officials and elders of Soneyan Dukuh Kedungpanjang Village. The data collection technique uses 3 techniques, including, (1) Participant observation, (2) Interviews, (3) Documentation.

The observation was carried on the performance of the annual masked Guel sponsored by the residents of Soneyan village in 2022. This researcher attended the entire day documenting each operation as they emerged through field notes, submissions, images, and filming. The programmatic structure, character masks and costumes, dance styles, musical accompaniment, and interaction with the audience were carefully planned. The researcher also assisted in the communal meals and ritual offerings which bookended the main performance. This immersion observation offered the means of understanding the performative and ritualistic aspects of the tradition. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 15 key informants –performers, musicians, and village elders recognized as knowledge holders of the masked wayang tradition. Interviewees were the current puppet master dalang (1), two mask carvers, four dancers (3 friends and 1 sister of the dancer we met that night), two gamelan players and six community elders, chosen by purposive and snowball sampling.

One part of the interviews was structured and was based on the following themes using open-ended questions, like a close association, the origins of agbabo music and how this music tradition has evolved in the community of Soneyan. Theatre in terms of self and community in terms of their masked wayang theoretical significance and functions. Interviews were transcribed and translated into English based on fieldnotes taken during interviews conducted in Javanese and Indonesian that were audio-recorded with permission. This was 60 minutes on average. As a documentation, they gathered written and visual materials on the Soneyan masked wayang tradition, examples of scripts of performed narratives; photographs and sketches of masks and costumes; and excerpts of news media coverage of past performances. These additional materials augmented the observation and interview data.

Data analysis was inductive and thematic. Transcripts of interviews and field notes were read and re-read several times and from there categorized in themes and related sub-themes. Such patterns emerged across descriptions of performance elements, meaning-making and socio-cultural significance (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The masked wayang tradition was examined in terms of its performance practice, in how it continues and changes, in how it represents values and identity here, and in how the tradition fits the village social and ritual life. These findings are illustrated using ethnographic vignettes and quotes. Participant observation combined with interviews and documentation allowed researchers to gain a comprehensive view of the Soneyan masked wayang tradition. Interviews thus helped to put the observation of one full performance cycle into a broader context of the tradition's longer-term development and significance. The qualitative analysis resulted in detailed accounts and contextually embodied interpretations of the performative and socio-cultural aspects. In this way the paper increases its credibility and trustworthiness of its ethnographic findings by adding these additional notes on method.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Preliminary Observation Results

This research was conducted in Soneyan Village, Dukuh Kedungpanjang, Margoyoso District, Pati Regency. The livelihood of the residents of Soneyan Dukuh Kedungpanjang Village is farmers with cassava plantations, almost all the residents here earn their livelihood as farmers. A village located far from the city, which has a big influence on education. This village still stores and preserves various Javanese customs and arts. The most unique ones include lamporan culture and masked wayang performances. Researchers examined one of the customs of Soneyan village residents, namely wayang mask. Folklore is a collective culture that is spread widely across generations to the next generation in various versions, both oral and written accompanied by examples with gestures (Nafisa et al., 2021).

Sanggar Waringin Tunggal is a punden located in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet. Sanggar Waringin Tunggal was only inaugurated in 2022, so this place was previously called Punden. Punden is a place of prayer, a special celebration by the residents of Kedungpanjang hamlet because in this punden there are ancestors or so-called great-grandmothers who are often made to pray special bancakan. Apart from that, Sanggar Waringin Solo from ancient times was a place created for mask puppet performances. Because it is in this place that masked puppet performances are performed with the aim of respecting and being grateful for our earth which has been given fertile soil. The existence of mask puppet performances in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet, Margoyoso District, Pati Regency from ancient times until now still exists and is preserved. The location for this masked wayang performance is at "Sanggar Waringin Tunggal" during the day, but at night the location moves to Mr. Subiyanto's house as kamituwo hamlet Kedungpanjang.

3.2 Needs Analys

This research was carried out in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet. One of the villages where the community still maintains and preserves local traditions. Researchers carried out observations at the house of the head of the masked wayang performance, Mr. Suharso. Researchers carried out research at Sanggar Waringin Tunggal (punden) in Soneyan Hamlet, Kedungpanjang Village. Documentation was carried out during the wayang mask performance, the researcher wrote dialogue related to the title of the research. The residents of Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet, were very enthusiastic when the wayang mask performance was held. The traditions in this village are very strong and are still preserved by local residents. This wayang mask performance has several sequences that must be followed on the day of the performance. First, all residents of Soneyan Village, Dukuh Kedungpanjang, must pray together at the Waringin Tunggal Studio (Punden). Second, the puppet performance is held when the group prayer is finished. Third, the conclusion of the wayang mask performance is held at the house of the elder who performs the wayang mask performance. Activities that have been arranged from start to finish from past to present must be carried out correctly and in sequence.

3.3 History of Masked Wayang

Humans are social creatures who always need other people in their lives. The necessities of life guide humans to always interact with other people. To convey various needs or ideas, humans need language as an intermediary. Before 1952, mask puppetry already existed and was carried out from generation to generation from the ancestors of Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet. This is in line with the opinion of Qodriyah and Wahyudiarto (2018) that this wayang mask performance is a tradition that has developed and is still being preserved, especially in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet. The performance of Wayang Mask in Soneyan Hamlet, Kedungpanjang Village, Margoyoso District, Pati Regency, Central Java, is an art form of performing dance dramas using masks. This performance is thought to have existed since 1896. During the heyday of the Mataram kingdom, mask performances spread to the north coast, west and east of Java. Like the Soneyan Mask Wayang in Kedungpajang Hamlet, it is also patterned after the Lor-wetan coastal Javanese sub-culture.

The Soneyan Mask Wayang in Kedungpajang hamlet has experienced three periods of puppeteer leadership, the first was the puppeteer Sura Astono who was the puppeteer of the Mask Wayang from 1896-1941 who then died in 1941 and was replaced by his grandson named Surat, he has been the puppeteer since 1942- 1977, because of his advanced age, he was replaced by his son, Ngusbi, who has been a puppeteer in the wayang mask since 1978. The mask used in

the Kedungpajang mask wayang performance has changed hands several times, starting from Sarman, Lasiman, Suwoto until now it is owned by Edris who reconstructed and repainted in 1970 and 1974.

The story performed in the wayang mask performance is the theme of the play sren (dewi sri) Among Tani which usually shows stories about the lives of agricultural communities. The Wayang Mask performance is used for village cleansing rituals or village alms in the month of Apit (Javanese calendar) on Saturday Kliwon (Nisa et al., 2021) The writer's creativity in arranging conflict and building conflict determines whether a story is interesting or not. In fact, something that catches the reader's attention is the events leading up to the conflict, conflict, climax and resolution. Events and conflicts are generally interrelated. If there is a conflict, there will be further events, namely the consequences of the conflict, until a resolution occurs. The preservation of the soneyan mask puppets of Kedungpajang village has been passed down from generation to generation. The preservation of the Soneyan Mask Wayang Mask in Kedungpajang village is carried out traditionally in certain areas, namely in the Soneyan village of Kedungpajang hamlet itself, which has been carried out from generation to generation. It is not known for certain who its creator is, because basically this art is a folk art so it is not known for certain who its creator is. The supporting elements of this soneyan masked wayang performance consist of the puppeteer as the antawecana, accompanist, dancers, and penrawit, usually numbering 2-5 people.

3.4 Observation Results

The story performed in the wayang mask performance is the theme of the play sren (dewi sri) Among Tani which usually shows stories about the lives of agricultural communities. The structure of the wayang mask performance is divided into several parts, namely, the first part of the performance presents the nembe dance and pratajaya dance, the core part of the presentation is the story content, and the final part presents the patrajaya dance and kelana dance. Social values are life values that are upheld by society and used as a benchmark for acting in the social life lived with fellow individuals in society (Nafisa et al., 2021). The nembe dance is the dance at the beginning of the performance of the wayang mask in Soneyan village. This nembe dance means that every time you do something, there must be an initial stage, and with dance performances you will make preparations for the success of a dance performance. The preparation stage is preparing the requirements for running a show. The nembe dance is performed by four figures, namely two men with funny/slangy characters and two male knight figures who are handsome and dashing. The accompaniment contained in the Nembe Dance is only limited to depicting and supporting the atmosphere of the dance. The nembe dance poem contains praise for the beauty of a warrior in a wayang mask character. The rhythm used is slow and moderate. The slow rhythm depicts the subtle character of the warrior. The moderate rhythm depicts an enthusiastic and lively character. The following is an illustration of the Nembe Dance, a Masked Puppet Performance in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet.

Persanta dance is a form of human creation that has beautiful value. The Persanta Dance presentation pattern is divided into three parts, namely the beginning, the main part and the end. The first part of the performance begins with offering obong-obong and playing gamelan music. The core part is the persanta dance section on various dance movements. The final part ends with the dancers entering backstage. The presentation elements of the Persanta Dance can be seen from the dance movements which give a dynamic, agile and assertive impression. This impression arises because the tempo in the dance performance uses a lot of energy. The impression of agility arises when the tempo used is fast. A dynamic impression arises when the keprak musical accompaniment is played and gives accents to the Persanta Dance movements so that it looks attractive and not monotonous.

The main part is presented with scenes I to scene X in this part of the story starting with the story of the match between Uncle Badokbasu and Dewi Sri. The match was carried out but Dewi Sri refused. In the next scene, there is a war, until at the end of the story Dewi Sri is cursed to become rice and Vishnu is cursed to become cassava. This curse indicates that the majority of the people of Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet, make their living as farmers, so that in this puppet performance it can be used as a symbol so that Soneyan Village can have fertile land for planting and gardening. The final part of the performance is presented by the Patrajaya dance, which is the dance presented in the wayang mask performance in Soneyan Village, Kedungpanjang Hamlet, at the core of the story. The Patrajaya Dance is an extra dance performed by two male dancers depicting Resi Sarasjati and Uncle Pratajaya. The Nembe Dance and Persanata Dance are presented at the beginning of the puppet performance after which they enter the main scene or story. Kelana Dance generally refers to a type of dance that depicts a person's journey or depiction. The word "Kelana" comes from Indonesian which means journey. The concept of kelana dance can vary in various cultures and regions. Kelana dance has different nuances depending on local traditions and cultural meanings where the dance developed. Several terms or names for works of art are often created by contemporary artists to convey certain ideas or concepts. Kelana Dance is a dance that is presented at the end or as a closing.

Among the performance features of the Soneyan masked wayang for example, we find the chiaroscuro symbology that sheds light on the principals of life in the village based on principles of agriculture, social cohesion and a balanced spiritual life. This reinforces the centrality of the Dewi Sri and Sedana story in terms of the deep connection between rice growing and plentiful harvests and the life of the community in both material and spiritual terms. The dynamic interplay between Dewi Sri (rice goddess) and Sedana (her consort) is representative of life and fertility in both the agricultural and human realms. The composition of the performance, from the routine of the Goyongan figures in dance and jokes at the beginning, to the delicate movements Panji and Klana characters, corresponds to society's platitude, respect, the dialog

of power interest. The clowns cavorting among the audience symbolize the rustic wisdom and the equalitarian philosophy of the masses, while the prince and princess mirror the virtues of nobility, civility and cosmic unity to which all should emulate.

The ritual offerings and communal feast before and during the wayang mask performance are a medium through which the community expresses its gratitude and respect to the spirits of the ancestors and the forest, and forge social relationships among village members. The eating together of the blessed meal after the communal recitation of prayers and the performance of the narratio enacts a Hoc est enim corpus meum, understanding the meal as a sacred communion in which the consumption of the blessed food is the restoration of a double entente of spiritual and social nourishment, the consumption of the body as the digestion of a universal ethical pact. The survival of this tradition in spite of economic pressures for modernization and religious change speaks to the symbolic import of the masked form of wayang for the Soneyan community. Simultaneously, the ethnographic findings acknowledge the meanings and functions of masked wayang are not static, as they are consistently negotiated and altered by members of the community. Younger generations on stage as dancers, musicians or as audience members increasing the process of cultural transmission as well the potential for creative adaptation. Not only do these clown scenes add layer upon layer of modern social commentary and humour to the tales; new materials and technologies in mask and costume production mean that tradition rumbles on, as typified by the photographed shock of vibrancy and misrule. In this light the Soneyan masked wayang can be seen as pivotal place for the performance and enactment of the community vision and morals. It therefore works both integratively and regeneratively, summoning villagers into community bond through ritual remembrance of ancestral behaviors, marking out a shared horizon of meaning and aspiration over against the flux of climate change. Through its symbolic enactments and participatory rituals, the performance clearly expresses, and helps to define, the community's ethos, worldview, and social practices.

This study thus places these ethnographic insights in to a broader consideration of anthropological discussions of the usefulness of ritual performance as a mediating mechanism for social cohesion and cultural survival (be they in the spirit of the work of Turner 1982 or Schechner 1988) demonstrating how masked wayang as the Soneyan know it, is a key cultural resource that reaffirms cultural norms, establishes social ties and cohesions, and guarantees the sustainability of the community through tumultous times. They create an important contribution to an emerging literature that acknowledges the complex interrelations of performance, ritual, and social life in the continuous production and reproduction of Javanese cultural patrimony. Wayang Mask as a traditional folk art, despite facing various challenges and obstacles, still survives to this day. The people of Kedungpanjang hamlet have made efforts to maintain and develop their culture through the process of cultural transmission. Initially, the Soneyan Mask Wayang performance functioned as part of the ritual tradition or slametan almsgiving ceremony. It is believed that through earth almsgiving accompanied by Soneyan Mask Wayang performances, the community will make plants fertile and produce abundant harvests. In its development, the Soneyan mask puppet show has become a means of entertainment for the Soneyan Kedungpajang community, which is usually performed at circumcisions, weddings, independence days and other events.

This wayang mask performance is performed in a waringin studio or what is usually called punden and is held every 10th of the month of Apit (Javanese month) once a year. The residents of Soneyan village really believe in the existence of this tradition. According to the residents, the performance of this puppet show aims to pray to God Almighty so that the earth they live in is safe and peaceful, good fortune is smooth, and avoids repulsion of evil (avoiding evil influences). The story performed in the wayang mask performance is the theme of the play sren (dewi sri) Among Tani which usually shows stories about the lives of agricultural communities. The structure of this wayang mask performance is very different from other wayang performances. The presentation structure of this wayang mask performance has several sequences that must be followed on the day of the performance. First, all residents of Soneyan Village, Dukuh Kedungpanjang, must pray together at the Waringin Tunggal Studio (Punden). Second, the puppet performance is held when the group prayer is finished. Third, the closing of the wayang mask performance is held at the house of the elder who performs the wayang mask performance. Activities that have been arranged from start to finish from past to present must be carried out correctly and in sequence. The structure of the wayang mask performance is divided into several parts, namely, the first part of the performance presents the nembe dance and pratajaya dance, the core part of the presentation is the story content, and the final part presents the patrajaya dance and kelana dance.

This ethnographic study of masked wayang tradition in Soneyan village, Kedung panjang hamlet, Pucakwangi, Pati Regency, Central Java, shows the following results, the masked wayang of the Soneyan is a tradition more than hundreds of years old and is still maintained today due to the living tradition of community member´s active involvement in the traditions and their cultural transmition from one generation to another. Secondly, the sacrality of the masked wayang performance structure, its character types and narrative content, feedbacks to reinforce and reflect back upon central agricultural fertility, social harmony and spiritual balance values and beliefs of the host community. The masked wayang acts as means of integration as is regenerated by the soneyan community, which harbors and maintains social cohesion in the presence of modernization. Third, the meanings of performances and of masked wayang are not fixed but are rather always being reflexively negotiated and creatively re imagined by their cultural constituency through mutual acclimation and resiliency.

These findings are pertinent as they help to enrich the understanding of the living cultural heritage of Soneyan village and how it has contributed to social life and community identity. Examining the ritual performance of the masked wayang tradition, as an arch form of Javanese wayang play, and documenting its outstanding elements of performance, stage setting, social context, symbolism means and prescribing, this study shows that in the heart of Javanese cultural continuity lies a mutual lasting interrelationship between ritual performance and cultural traditionality as experienced in a Javanese village. This article adds to the burgeoning literature on the Javanese performing arts by describing a particularly small-scale example of a wayang tradition already classified as masked that has received very little academic attention. It illustrates the importance of detailed and situated research in illuminating the diversity and complexity of Javanese cultural practices away from the well-documented court and urban traditions.

In doing so, it frames the Soneyan masked wayang as a form of cultural resource enacted by community members to navigate change, contributing to broader anthropological discussions of the impact of ritual performance on social resilience and cultural sustainability. The article demonstrates the measures which the village communities are willingly taking to keep and refashion their cultural heritage in the face of modernizing inroads. The results of this study can be used to actively involve the local community, cultural organizations and governmental agencies in the preservation, and development of the Sonean masked wayang tradition, which can serve as an essential reflection of local cultural identity. By highlighting the cultural and social value of the tradition, the work incentivizes its recognition and thus facilitates passing the practice down to future cohorts.

4. Conclusion

Puppets are images or imitations of humans to show a play or story. The play is told by a person called a puppeteer. There are several types of wayang, including shadow puppets which are made with dried sheets of animal skin, wayang wong which is played using people as characters in the wayang story, wayang golek which is made of wood and resembles a human form. Masked puppets are a type of wayang wong. Wayang wong are wayang people who can play a role in wayang performances, usually these wayang wong are people wearing certain costumes. However, according to the definition of wayang mask, wayang wong wears a costume and a mask to cover his face. Wayang Orang Mask is a puppet that uses tools (masks) made from forest kapok wood and candlenut wood, then sungging, then given a golden color to make it look alive, so that it is not much different from shadow puppets. This mask puppetry has been passed down from generation to generation. The wayang mask performance in its presentation consists of elements of dialogue, story, theme, dancers, movement, clothing and music. In the Mataram era, mask performances spread throughout the coast, including the north coast, as well as the western and eastern parts of the Kejawen region. In conclusion, this ethnography of the Soneyan masked wayang is of great value for the documentation, description and especially the comprehension of a present-day cultural heritage of a Javanese village society. This article shows the value of engaged, field-based research for grasping the complex relationships among performance, ritual, and social life in the continual shaping and reshaping of cultural traditions.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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