

JOGLOSEMAR WAYANG KULIT:**A Study on the Symbols and Meaning of *Wayang Kulit* in Jogja, Solo, and Semarang**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the semiotic meaning of *Wayang Gagrak* in Jogjakarta, Surakarta, and Semarang. It was also intended to examine the functions and indigenous elements of *Wayang Kulit* in those areas. This research employed a qualitative method to explore the issue in a flexible manner but at the same time, retaining an in-depth and accurate result. Peirce's semiotic analysis, comprising three elements, i.e., representamen, object, and interpretant, was used to scrutinize *Wayang Gagrak* from the three provinces mentioned previously. Representamen refers to everything that can function as a sign. The term object, in this context, refers to the component represented by the sign, while the interpretant is the interpretation of the sign. All data from the observation of *Wayang Gagrak* of the three areas, literature related to Peirce's semiotic analysis, and interview with informants (such as *dalang* or puppeteer, semiotic experts, and *Wayang* enthusiasts) were examined to present a thorough result. The criteria of this objective involve: (1) able to explore all details and signs represented visually in *Wayang Gagrak* of the selected areas; (2) able to present the meanings of the symbols of the *Wayang*, and; (3) able to examine the functions of the signs.

Keywords: *Wayang Kulit*, *Joglosemar*, conservation

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is rich in culture and traditions spread in every province. Koentjaraningrat (2000) asserts that cultures refer to the whole ideas, behaviors, and human creation in social life; cultures are obtained from the result of the learning process. Each region has unique and different cultures, among which is the Javanese culture. The Javanese cultural system uses a sign system (or *pasemon*, lit. means language style) to deliver messages or advice (Mulyono, 1982). Wayang Kulit has been one of the traditions unique to the Javanese community. It is a decorative art that represents the culture of the area.

Wayang Kulit is a type of puppet theater art, which serves as a medium of education, information distribution, and entertainment. Wayang is a flat, leather puppet colored differently representing the characters in the theatrical performance. A specific handle is used to move the puppet. Brandon (1996) points out that the visual and artistic value of the Javanese Wayang Kulit has its unique and specific structures, which are determined by the play (or *lakon*). The common stories for Wayang Kulit play involve Ramayana and Mahabarata. Every character represented by the puppet has its symbols and meanings. Wayang Kulit is an exquisite art for its invaluable, high quality, and magnificent characteristics with its ethics and aesthetics.

The oldest Wayang Kulit form is well-known as Wayang *purwa*. The word “Wayang” means “shadow”, and the term “purwa” means old or past. Wayang purwa is a development of several “chapters” of Sanskrit literature, specifically “Mahabarata” (Mulyono, 1982). This type of Wayang has been officially recognized since its structure and characters are based on the Mahabarata play. The model of the puppet, including the shape, size, and the characters, has undergone changes over time. Among the examples of Wayang Kulit developed based on the character’s involve Wayang Madya, Wayang *Panji*, Wayang *Dupara*, and Wayang *Calon Arang*. There are also other types of Wayang whose puppet has been developed, e.g., Wayang *Krucil*, Wayang *Klitik*, Wayang *Kancil*, Wayang *Geger*, Wayang *Suluh*, and Wayang *Rai Wong*.

Wayang Kulit has changed continuously to adjust with the current advancement. In today's millennial era, Wayang Kulit is adjusted to meet the market preference. Ki Enthus Susmono, a notable puppeteer from Tegal, has created continuous innovation in Wayang by modifying the puppet, even creating new puppet designs. Among the phenomenal design of Wayang by Ki Enthus Susmono is *Rai Wong's* design, which is inspired by the real human facial expression. He also designed some characters of the puppet based on the real figures, such as political figures and famous celebrities. This condition raises a question of whether or not the actualization of this recent Wayang represents the element of Wayang Gagrak Pesisiran from Semarang that contrasts to the Jogja and Solo Wayang.

The creation of Rai Wong Wayang is driven by the concern of Ki Enthus regarding the loss of traditional challenges, which is going to be replaced by foreign art. Using familiar figures as the characters of the puppet is expected to fit with the preference of the millennial generation. Wayang Rai Wong received a positive reception from many people. It is evident that the characters of Wayang Rai Wong can be categorized as Wayang Gagrak Pesisiran (Semarangan), which is cited by many as the opposite of the Jogja and Solo style of Wayang Gagrak. This concern urges an in-depth study to determine whether or not there are some advancements and significant correlations related to Wayang theater from Jogja and Solo. Another question is "what is the difference of Wayang from other areas"? These questions urge immediate responses due to the concern of Wayang preservation as the world's heritage. Furthermore, the importance of the study is driven by the urge to examine the current condition regarding the style of Wayang from Jogjakarta, Surakarta, and Semarang as the representative of egalitarian Gagrak Pesisiran.

From the above discussion, the objective of this research was to investigate the semiotic meaning of *Wayang Gagrak* in Jogjakarta, Surakarta, and Semarang. It employed Peirce's semiotic analysis by examining the signs to produce communicative information. The semiotic analysis focused on exploring various meanings of the signs embedded in Wayang from these three areas.

Charles Sanders divides Peirce's semiotic analysis into three groups; (1) syntactic semiotics, which focuses on studying the correlation of forms of one sign to another; (2) semiotics, which study the meaning of signs, and; (3) pragmatics, which examine the functions and correlation of signs and its users (Sachari, 2005).

The semiotic analysis focused on exploring various meanings of the signs embedded in Wayang from Jogjakarta, Surakarta, and Semarang; it was intended to (1) provide insight regarding the distinctive characteristics of the signs and their correlations of Wayang Gagrak from the three areas; (2) explore the meanings of the signs of the message and advice of the Wayang; (3) explore information related to the functions of the signs that are helpful for puppeteers during the theatrical performance, and; (4) explore indigenous meanings of the selected Wayang, which is essential to the preservation of the Javanese culture. This study is expected to contribute to the development of artwork in the field of semiotics study and puppet art performance.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach in scrutinizing complex data, functioned to find out a clear explanation from the data analysis of a particular context. A qualitative method was considered flexible in this context, considering the fact that the researcher was the main research instrument, and the real situation served as the object of the continuous analysis process. For this reason, the qualitative method was beneficial to depict a phenomenon and social reality accurately, with detailed and depth description. Semiotic analysis was used to examine the data. This analysis elaborated and explored the signs (either words or symbols) to produce an interpretation of the meaning in a certain context (Patton, 2007). Through a critical paradigm, the research finding was interpreted through a qualitative descriptive method.

The data of the study consisted of three groups, i.e., (1) visual signs of Wayang Kulit Joglosemar, (2) information regarding the interpretation of the signs generated from the semiotic analysis, and (3) the data from the interview transcription. Data collection procedures encompassed observation, literature

review, and interview. The observation focused on the visual aspects, i.e., the pattern, line design, and color of the puppet. The data analysis examined literature related to the studies of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis.

C. DISCUSSION

1) Visual Aspects of Wayang Kulit Joglosemar

Wayang can be defined as a puppet representing a silhouette of a figure. Its naming originated from the Javanese vocabulary *wewayangan* (literally "shadow"). This is based on the empirical evidence that the Wayang Kulit performance, the *dalang* or the puppeteer play the puppet behind a special backdrop made of a fabric known as *kelir*. The shadow of the puppet is reflected from this fabric, representing the origin of the name Wayang (derived from the term *wewayang*). According to the known historical record, the term „Wayang“ has been used since Balitung King's era in 907 A.D. It is evident from an inscription with the word “maWayang” written on it. Mulyono (1982) claims that the word „Wayang“ associates with the root words, i.e., *yang*, *yung*, *yong*, *yeng*, and *ying*. These words are found in several vocabularies, such as *doyong* (literally unstable, mobile, and sloping), *layang* (literally flying), and *royong* (literally moving from one place to another). On top of that, these root words share a similar concept or idea, i.e., the shadow moving and flying inconsistently, dynamic, and randomly. The word “Wayang” and “wewayang” is defined as a shadow play. Recently, the term Wayang is regarded as a moving puppet or shadow played behind the *kelir*.

From the above definition, it can be said that the shapes of Wayang can take in many forms. The word puppet refers to 2D or 3D objects. In addition, the puppet resembles the shape of a human with its parts of the body, i.e., head, body, arm, and leg, with its colorful attire. Each color of the costume has its meanings. This proves that during the Wayang performance, the *dalang* plays a flat, leather puppet called *Wayang Kulit*. On a certain occasion, the *dalang* also play wooden puppets known as *Wayang Golek*. These ideas underline the notion that the visual

actualization of *Wayang* can be examined from various perspectives, including shapes, dimensions, colors, and materials.

The name *Wayang Kulit* is from the fact that the puppet is made of leather with its various characteristics, from the elements of physical traits and colors. This present study focuses on *Wayang Kulit* from Gagrak joglosemar style (Jogja-Solo-Semarang). The term Joglosemar does not only represent the geographical areas, but also the development of *Wayang Kulit* from different perspectives. *Wayang Kulit* Gagrak in Solo was developed in Surakarta. *Wayang Kulit* Gagrak of Jogja was developed in Yogyakarta. And lastly, the Semarangan *Wayang* was originally from the coastal area outside *negari gung* (Yogyakarta and Surakarta). For this reason, *Wayang Kulit* Gagrak Semarangan can be considered from the northern coastal area of the Javanese Island (Tegal, Semarang, Lasem, and Surabaya) or Banyumas and all areas within East Java province.

Wayang Kulit Gagrak of Surakarta style is different from those of Yogyakarta. This is determined by the physical traits of each puppet from the two styles (see Figure 1 below).



Figure 1: Hanoman in Surakarta Gagrak (right) and Yogyakarta Gagrak (left)

(Source: www.google.com)

Based on the above figure, the puppet used in the Surakarta style has its face facing downwards, while the Yogyakarta style has its face facing upwards. There are other differences between the two puppets shown in the above figure.

Wayang Gagrak Semarangan style tends to illustrate an egalitarian impression. It is shown by the distinctive color pattern and line, representing the straightforward attitude of the community in the coastal area. These characteristics are visible in the Wayang designed by Ki Enthus Susmono. A manifestation of Wayang Pesisiran represented by Tegal style, Semarangan style illustrates an image contrast to those of Solo and Yogyakarta style. The distinctive feature of Ki Enthus Susmono's Wayang Kulit is the antithesis of the character of the two styles mentioned previously.

Wayang Gagrak Semarangan by Ki Enthus was presented in UNNES with the notable Wayang Rai Wong that draws the attention of many. In a YouTube video, Ki Enthus explained his motivation in creating Wayang Kulit Rai Wong in an interview with a private television. The inspiration of Wayang Rai Wong is when elementary students laughed at the Wayang performance by Ki Enthus. The students told Ki Enthus that the nose part of Bima, one of the puppets, is similar to the bird's beak. Upon hearing this, Ki Enthus changed the design of Bima, changing it into a shape resembling a human's face. This modification results in a modified Rai Wong puppet with the incorporation of human's facial features; the example of this modified Wayang is provided in the following Figure 2.



Figure 2. Bima Puppet in Surakarta Style (right) and Bima in Rai Wong Style (left)

(Source: documentation of Ki Enthus Susmono from www.google.com)

Ki Enthus Susmono is among dalang or puppeteers notable for his creativity. In the development of Wayang, Ki Enthus is noted for his innovation unique to himself, which differ his artworks with other puppeteers. He presented a distinctive Wayang performance compared to other orthodox Wayang, e.g., Surakarta and Yogyakarta style. This study categorizes the types of Rai Wong Wayang by Ki Enthus into two: the conventional and non-conventional Wayang.

The conventional style refers to Rai Wong Wayang with no modification in the shape of the puppet, adhering to the original Wayang performance. Examples in Figure 2 provide the detail regarding the character Rai Wong-style Bima that retains the characteristics of Gagrak Surakarta (the body and leg). The only difference lies in the facial feature of the two puppets. Such integration indicates that Ki Enthus follows the conventional design of Wayang (design of the *pancanaka* nail in Bima with black and white fabric pattern, and hair coils) in creating his Rai Wong Wayang as shown in Figure 2.

The non-conventional style, on the other hand, describes the modified Rai Wong Wayang that breaks the original Wayang design. Ki Enthus made several changes in his Rai Wong Wayang that contrasts with the conventional Wayang Gagrak in Surakarta or Yogyakarta style. The inspiration of Rai Wong Wayang came from famous public figures and popular fictional characters, such as the popular superheroes Batman, Superman, Transformer, Kamen Rider, dinosaurs. Several designs of Wayang Rai Wong inspired by public figures involve Barrack Obama, Donald Trump, George Bush, Saddam Hussain, and other puppeteers (dalang), as well as national and international celebrities. In this type of Wayang, the puppet resembles a famous figure wearing his or her modern attire as shown in the following figure.



Figure 3. G.W. Bush and Saddam Husain Wayang
(Source: www.google.com)

Figure 3 provides an example of non-conventional Rai Wong that depicts a person through the medium of Wayang Kulit. Unlike the conventional Rai Wong that retains the original features of Wayang Kulit (Gagrak Solo or Jogja), the non-conventional style symbolizes a breakthrough in the concept of Wayang. All accessories and attires, skin colors, body shape, facial features, and weapons are made original following the characteristics of the person. This type of Wayang is favored by the public.

4.1.2 Meanings in Joglosemar Wayang

Another problem that this research attempts to investigate is the meanings embedded in Joglosemar Wayang Kulit using the concept of semiotics. The word semiotics comes from Greek terminology *semeion* (literally “symbol”), which happens to be one of the Asklepiades medical or hypocrite terminologies. The term *semeion*, in the medical context, has the same meaning and focus of study to that of the inferential diagnostic and symptomatology. A sign, essentially, embeds a meaning referring to a particular object. From the terminological perspective, the term semiotic is defined as the branch of study that examines sign systems and its related process (van Zoest, 1993). Therefore, semiotics is a study that addresses objects, phenomena, and cultures as a sign system (Teeuw, 1984).

The meaning embedded in Joglosemar Wayang can be perceived conventionally (adhering to the style of original Wayang) and non-conventionally (similar to that of Rai Wong Wayang, whose meaning is adjusted based on a particular social context). The physical appearance of Wayang Kulit is defined based on the color, expression, and accessories that correlate with a given issue representing the theme of Wayang performance.

1) Meanings of Visual Aspects of Wayang Kulit Joglosemar: Peirce’s

Semiotic Analysis

Based on the observation, Wayang Kulit Semarang by Ki Enthus Susmono comprises two combination styles: the creation and the orthodox style. Rai Wong (Semarangan) Wayang shares some similarities in terms of the accessories with

Wayang Kulit Gagrak in Solo and Jogja style. The manifestation of the orthodox style of Gagrak Solo is seen in the puppet's shape, pattern, and the color is visible in the Semarangan Wayang by Ki Enthus. Figure 4 shows the example of the combination of the original style of Gagrak Solo and the creation style by Ki Enthus in the character Raden Werkudara.

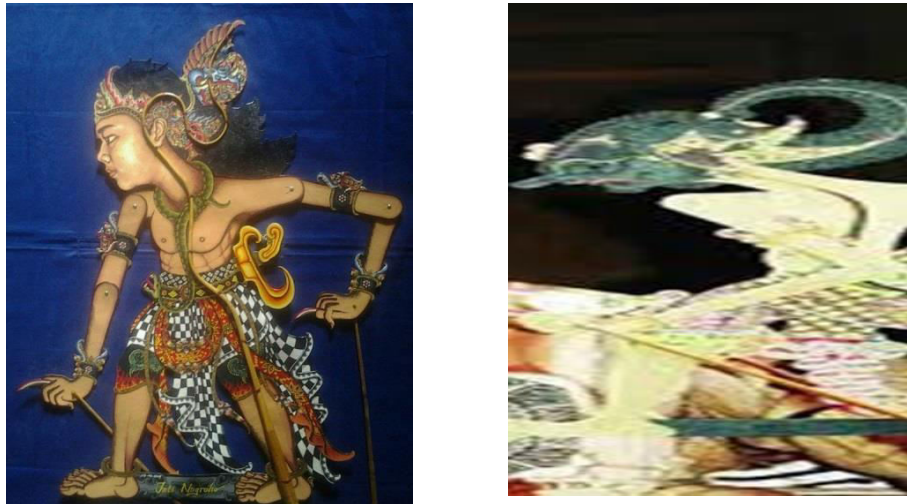


Figure 4. Wayang Werkudara Gagrak Solo (right) and Gagrak Semarangan (left)

(Source: documentation of Ki Enthus Susmono from www.google.com)

Symbols in the above Figure 4, according to Peirce's semiotics analysis, encompass three basic elements, i.e., representamen, object, and interpretant. The general perception or representamen refers to all that can function as a sign, something that can be perceived. Components represented by the signs, which are perceivable through human senses and imager in nature, are regarded as an object. The interpretant is defined as the interpretation of signs. For this reason, the meaning of the signs from Peirce's perspective is not the only representative but also interpretative.

Peirce divides the category of signs based on their basis or ground into three: sinsigns, qualisigns, and legisigns. Sinsigns refer to signs which are based on the actual occurrence or fact. All unsymbolized statements of individuals are basically sinsigns. Qualisigns refer to signs underpinned by a particular trait or

quality. Legisigns are signs driven by a convention, generally accepted regulations and norms, and codes.

Representamen or the common perception of the visual appearance of Semarangan Rai Wong is presented in the human look (*uwong*) of the character Werkudara; this character is not represented in the traits of animals or plants. This notion is emphasized by the concept of qualisigns, which further breaks down the character Werkudara into several physical traits, namely: (1) a realistic two-dimensional image of a human face facing sideways including the forehead, eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth, cheeks, and chin; (2) realistic two-dimensional images of the human body including the neck, neckline, chest, chest lines, abdomen, and stomach lines; (3) an image of a hand that was cut into pieces with connectors between the shoulder, arm and elbow joints of the puppet, the shape of a finger clenched with a long nail on the thumb; (4) realistic foot shapes including calves, legs, soles, and toes in proportions that are longer and clearly visible; (5) Javanese traditional clothing decoration includes *kuluk* (traditional Javanese headdress), snake-shaped necklace, shoulder strap (armband), wristband, anklet, pants, *lancingan* (batik sarong) gloves, belts, and *keris* (traditional Javanese sword), and; (6) colors, i.e., brown for skin, black for eyeballs, eyebrows, and hair, and a mix of blue, brick red, black, white, and gold for the accessories. These visual looks are the manifestation of a Wayang with human features.

A distinguishing characteristic between the puppet of Gagrak Solo and Gagrak Yogyakarta can be seen in the character Werkudara. This Wayang incorporates the elements of the human face, resulting in an impression of a long nose. The preference of using black color on the face part of Werkudara is the manifestation of the chivalry; this also indicates that Werkudara is a knight. The symbolization of a mature character is shown in the neatly-arranged hair coil of the Werkudara character. Another notable difference between Gagrak Solo and Gagrak Jogja lies in the expression of the puppet. In Gagrak Solo, the puppet is facing downwards, while the puppet of Gagrak Jogja has its face facing upwards.

The qualisign analysis generates a personal impression based on the empirical experience of the researcher. This personal impression underpins the

process of sign analysis; the result of this step is as follows. First, the realistic human facial expression of the puppet depicts that the character is a young adult. It is also shown in the face of the puppet that has fewer wrinkles and the selection of black as the hair color. Second, the physical traits of the puppet, i.e., broad chest and abdominal muscles, emphasize that the character (the puppet) is a strong man. In contrast with the previous description, Gagrak Solo in Figure 4 depicts that Werkudara's character has entered his maturity stage. It is evident from the coiled hair arranged neatly, communicating the idea that the character is no longer in his teen ages.

Third, the skin on the shoulder, arms, and limbs of the puppet has no wrinkles signifies the quality of a strong knight. Other traits symbolizing the vigorous characteristic involve the fistful hand model of the puppet with its thumb and long nail pointing upwards. Fourth, the muscular legs with big feet and long toes clearly illustrate that the character is self-reliant. The absence of shoes indicates the impression of a humble person.

Five, the impression depicted the accessories used by the character can be divided into several parts. (a) A large and magnificent brick red and indigo *kuluk* (headdress) shows that the puppet is a mindful and noble knight; (b) a necklace with a snake ornament opening its mouth with its body coiled shows self-control: that the character can maintain his emotions, anger, and fear to reach harmony; (c) shoulder ties, wristbands, black, red and gold wristbands with gold floral motifs signifies the figure of a respected knight; (d) a picture of a golden *keris* with a red line is a sign of a strong weapon that is used to protect others; and (e) black and white checkered cloths (sarong) gives the impression that the figure has a firm attitude.

Sixth, the color in the Rai Wong puppet is a manifestation of several values. The brown skin and black pupils, eyebrow, and hair emphasize the natural and realistic features of a human. On top of that, these colors symbolize the humbleness and charisma of the character. Using certain colors in the accessories signifies the firm decision of good and bad sides (black and white), a tremendous

power (brick red), glory and wealth (gold), and harmonious and mindful life (indigo).

The visual appearance of Gagrak Semarang in Figure 4, according to the legisigns perspective, illustrates Raden Werkudara's character at his young age (he is called as Raden Bratasena). Signs representing this concept are shown in the elements of nails and *lancingan* (sarong). In Solo and Jogja style, the long fingernails dangling next to both thumbs of the puppet are called *pancanaka* nails. These nails are exclusive to the seven descents of Bathara Bayu. In other words, the puppet character shown in the figure has Bathara Bayu's power. Black and white sarong with checkered motifs are commonly used by the character Raden Werkudara in Wayang puppetry. In the concept of Wayang, this character is described as a firm person, with his unwavering resolution. This attitude resonates with the concept of the black and white sarong, signifying the differences between the bad and good.

Based on the object analysis, the signs embedded in the above Rai Wong puppet figure illustrate the character Raden Werkudara or Raden Bratasena. This is because the puppet possesses the same qualities and traits of Raden Werkudara, e.g., (1) possessing tremendous power and spiritual abilities; (2) possessing wise nature and having good self-control; (3) taking care of others and contributes to shared goals; (4) possessing firm attitude to distinguish the bad and good, and; (5) possessing the wealth of a person that brings positive vibes to others. The result of the analysis in the interpretan level has been elaborated in the discussion of qualisigns, sinsigns, and legisigns of Figure 4.

4.1.3 The Functions of Visual Aspects of Wayang Kulit Joglosemar: A Cultural Conservation Perspective

As an art performance, Wayang Kulit has several functions as: (1) a reflection, a role model for life embedding cultural values; (2) a medium for ceremony and other rituals; (3) symbol of harmony in life, both physically and mentally sought by humans; and (4) a medium of harmony and balance between macrocosm and

microcosm (*jagad gedhe* and *jagad cilik*) found in the inner side of humans (Suharyono, 2005).

In a broader context, Wayang serves as; (1) a medium for education activities; (2) a medium to spread religious virtues; (3) an instrument to educate politics to the public; (4) a medium to unite people from different backgrounds; (5) an entertainment medium, and; (6) an instrument for traditional ceremonies, i.e., *tolak bala*, *ruwatan sukerta*, *larungan pantai* (ward off misfortune), and village cleanup or *Sedekah Bumi* where people pray for safety and protection from any harm or misfortune (Mulyono, 1982).

Similar to the above discussion, Wayang Kulit Semarang has several functions in many aspects. Among the notable example is the role of Wayang Kulit Semarang as a cultural conservation medium. The term conservation here is defined as the idea of providing protection and sustainable efforts in the utilization of natural resources and the cultural heritage of a nation (Jazuli, 2014: 3). All of these tenets are incorporated in Wayang Kulit Semarang.

Appreciation of the original Solo and Jogja style has been highlighted in a separate context. Recently, Ki Dalang Seno Nugroho from Bantul, Yogyakarta, has brought back Gagrak Yogyakarta to the public. Thousands of people watching the performance of Ki Seno Nugroho (as shown in a YouTube video) indicate their appreciation for this art showcase. This signifies the conservative efforts of Wayang Kulit. The existence of Gagrak Solo is reflected from the emergence of puppeteers or *dalang* performing this type of Wayang Kulit, such as Ki Anom Suroto, Ki Manteb Sudarsono, and Ki Bayu Aji.

Wayang Kulit Joglosemar functions as the medium of teaching the nation's culture. It is a cultural product that should be preserved and developed. The current globalization may pose a threat to the existence of Wayang. In a discussion forum, it is noted that today's young generation is lack of appreciation of this artwork. This fact is evident from the result of an interview with 30 university students, where 28 among them had no idea about characters in Wayang. For this reason, the preservation of the cultural heritage for Wayang

puppetry is crucial. An example to preserve Wayang is by re-introducing Wayang to society through art performance.

This helps the university students to get to know the characters in Wayang show. Popular figures used in Wayang Kulit Rai Wong further familiarize the students regarding this art performance, and this will, in turn, encourage them to love Wayang. This approach also allows the process of instilling local wisdom to the students. All of the approaches mentioned above are considered significant to the preservation of cultural heritage.

Having the quality of uniting people, Wayang Kulit performance shows that all people are equal; there are no upper-class and lower-class statuses. This is manifested in the setting of the audience seat unique to Wayang performance where its audience sits on the floor (*lesehan*). People with different backgrounds are united and treated equally as the citizens of Indonesia since Wayang Kulit, despite its origin from the Javanese community, is a culture unique to this country. This concept underlines the idea that Wayang can mediate the preservation and development of the national culture.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on Peirce's semiotic analysis, this study reveals several signs, symbols, and meanings of Wayang Kulit. The signs are in the colors, visual appearance, and expression of Wayang. The skin part of the puppet indicates the firmness. Further, each color, shape, and expression of the puppet in Wayang Kulit unfolds its meanings, depending on the context of each facial expression of the puppet. The meanings embedded in Joglosemar Wayang serve as the distinguishing characteristics of this Wayang. From the basic principle of the original Wayang Solo and Jogja, the meanings are interpreted accordingly based on this principle as shown in the interpretation of the character Werkudara. The physical appearance of Wayang Kulit Rai Wong is defined based on the color, expression, and accessories that correlate with a given issue representing the theme of Wayang performance. Wayang Kulit plays a major role in the preservation of the Javanese culture.

This study formulates several recommendations regarding the semiotic analysis of Joglosemar Wayang Kulit. Theoretically, this research functions as a reference for the development of a semiotic analysis of Wayang Kulit. Practically, this study provides an example for researchers and practitioners of Wayang, painting, and art performance. The understanding regarding the original principle of Wayang Kulit, involving Gagrak Solo and Gagrak Joga, should not be regarded as a concept that hinders innovation. For this reason, creativity should be incorporated in the preservation and development of Wayang to sustain the existence of this art performance, preventing the issue similar to the loss of Semarangan Wayang.

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