

REPRESENTATION OF JAVANESE PHILOSOPHY IN THE ART OF SANDUR AS A VIEW OF BOJONEGORO COMMUNITY LIFE

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Abstract: Sandur is a traditional theater art originating from agrarian areas, one of which is Bojonegoro. Sandur art tells the daily stories of agrarian society, such as farming. Sandur's art began as a children's game during the planting and harvesting seasons. Sandur is a form of tradition that contains the philosophies adopted by the community as a way of life. This study uses a folkloristic approach and cultural studies to reveal holistically and deeply about Sandur in Ledok Kulon Village, Bojonegoro District, Bojonegoro Regency. The data from this research are in the form of folklore expressions that appear in expressions, speeches, movements, or symbolic behavior in Sandur art. Sandur art has several stages, starting with the *Setren* ritual, *Buka Bumi*, the *Jaranan* dance (before the performance), and then the core of the show begins with the song *Panjak Hore*, then the four puppet characters enter the *blabar*. In the performance, Sandur implied Javanese philosophies, such as religious values, worldly values, spiritual values, and human values. These values reflect the behavior of the people of Bojonegoro. In addition, this philosophy can be a provision for learning about the views of the people of Bojonegoro in their daily lives.

Keywords: Sandur Arts, Javanese philosophy, Views of life, Bojonegoro

INTRODUCTION

Sandur is a traditional art in the form of traditional theater that tells about the life of the agricultural community from wiwit to rice harvesting. Sandur traditional art grows and develops in agrarian societies, such as Bojonegoro, Lamongan, and Tuban. Sandur tells about the farming system in agrarian society, hunting, trade, and urban culture which is marked by the opportunity to find work in the city (Rohmat, 2017). Sandur is performed by four characters, namely Balong, Petak, Tangsil, and Cawik. The four figures tell the story of the cultural transition of the village community to modern culture.

Sandur according to the community's narrative is defined as a performance that serves to entertain themselves and the community (Rohmat, 2017). Sandur comes from the words *isan* and *dhur* which means an all-night show. In addition, Sandur is also interpreted as *sandhangan dhuwur*, namely nobility. It is related to the glorified ancestors. Javanese people, especially indigenous peoples respect and honor their ancestors. Basically, Sandur art is a form of traditional art that is performed to honor the village ancestors.

Sandur performances in several areas, especially in Bojonegoro, have undergone many changes. The changes that occurred in Sandur Bojonegoro are that they highlight theatrical elements and the stories that are told are more adapted to the current socio-cultural conditions of society (ASB, Interview 22 May 2021). This is done so that Sandur can be accepted again by people who are currently turning to modern culture.

Sandur as a Javanese culture that is still preserved by the community, contains cultural values that become the philosophy of life for the local community. Javanese culture can be defined as all concepts that live in the human mind about things that are valuable, valuable, and important in life, so that they can become a way of life for the Javanese people (Koentjaraningrat, 1990). Javanese cultural values are considered as an abstract system, because they contain the concept of life from the human mind. The Javanese cultural values in

question are spiritual values, manners, harmony, obedience of children to parents, concepts of discipline and responsibility, and independence.

The people of Bojonegoro as one of the people who still maintain the traditional art of Sandur have a view of life and cultural values that are stored in Sandur. Cultural values that are firmly held by the people of Bojonegoro are spaciousness of heart, not jealousy, harmony with others, and not taking the property of others (Warsiman, 2015). These cultural values are also contained in Sandur, such as spiritual values, namely (i) the relationship between God, humans, and other living creatures; (ii) the ritual of inviting an angel (*Ngundang Widodari*) so that her spirit can enter the figure of Sandur. In addition, there are also values of harmony, responsibility, and independence contained in the core part of Sandur (Mukarromah & Puspito, 2021). However, the current tendency of the Bojonegoro people in accepting and implementing local cultural values is greatly reduced. This can be seen from the behavior of Bojonegoro teenagers who are modern, lacking respect for local culture through the participation of Sandur's audience so that people do not know about the culture.

This study discusses the representation of Javanese philosophy in the Sandur traditional art. Mukarromah & Puspito (2021) in their research entitled *Makna Simbolik dan Nilai-Nilai Moral Kesenian Sandur di Desa Sukorejo Kecamatan Parengan Kabupaten Tuban*, explained the symbolic meanings and moral values in each part of Sandur starting from the opening to the closing. The moral values in Sandur become normative values for the local community. The research conducted by Firdaus & Sukmawan (2021) explains the efforts of the Sandur Kembang Desa group in processing and developing Sandur art so that it attracts the attention of teenagers as cultural successors. In both studies, the aspect of Javanese philosophical values in Sandur art has not been described. Therefore, this research is expected to be able to complement previous research with the aim of (a) describing the stages of Sandur art; (b) describing the Javanese philosophy in Sandur's art; (c) describing the relevance of this philosophy to the life of the people of Bojonegoro. Through this research, it is hoped that it will provide knowledge for teenagers as the successors of tradition and become a way of life for the local community.

METHOD

This research took place in Ledok Kulon Village, Bojonegoro District, Bojonegoro Regency using a folkloristic approach and cultural studies. The location was chosen because Ledok Kulon Village is a place for the development of Sandur art which still exists until today. The ethnographic approach was chosen for data collection which was considered based on the research objective to describe holistically and deeply about the Sandur tradition in Bojonegoro through its presentation and as a way of life of the local community in behavior (Rosyada, 2020).

The data in this study are folkloristic expressions that can be seen from expressions, speeches, movements or symbolic behavior in the Sandur tradition which contains Javanese philosophy. The research data was obtained from art activists or traditional owners, namely the artist Sandur. The research data was taken through unstructured interview techniques and document studies and analyzed ethnographically. Interviews were conducted by giving questions freely to get in-depth data (Herdiansyah, 2020). Through document study, the researcher observed Sandur's performance from the video. Based on the data that has been collected, an ethnographic data analysis was carried out starting with a taxonomic analysis to divide sequentially the stages of the Sandur performance; componential analysis to identify elements in Sandur's performance; and analysis of cultural themes to find Javanese cultural values in Sandur and relate them to the way of life of the Bojonegoro people.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sandur Art Stages in Bojonegoro

Sandur art is one type of traditional art in Bojonegoro which is unique. The uniqueness found in Sandur is that there are several elements that make up Sandur, such as theater, humor, dance, and music (Herfidiyanti, 2014). Sandur art is usually staged at night after Isha until the early morning. Sandur art consists of several stages that cannot be separated from sacred elements like Javanese art in general.

“The Sandur stage begins with the Setren ritual, which is bringing Sandur's equipment to the ancestral grave. In addition, the puppet children perform personal rituals, namely to purify themselves. In the afternoon before the show there is a Buka Bumi ritual, which is to prepare an arena for playing Sandur, usually a small thanksgiving is held.”

(ASB, Interview 22 May 2021)

Sandur begins with a pre-show ritual, namely the *Setren* ritual, which is asking for blessings from *dhanyang* (ancestors). The *Setren* ritual is carried out by purifying oneself and Sandur's utensils, as well as bringing Sandur's equipment to the tomb which is sacred by the community and staying overnight. The equipment in question is *jaranan*, discordant rope for *Kalongking*, whip to awaken *jaranan* dancers (Khusnawiyah, 2019). For the people of Ledok Kulon, the tomb that is sacred is the tomb of Ki Andong Sari.

Before the show begins, in the afternoon, a *Buka Bumi* ritual is held, which is to prepare the area that will be used for the Sandur performance and a small thanksgiving is held. After the thanksgiving, *Blabar Janur Kuning*, the stage name for the Sandur performance, will be prepared as well as the installation of 4 bamboo stakes and *blabar* rope.

After the pre-show ritual, the Sandur performance will begin with the *Jaranan* dance. The *Jaranan* dance begins with *Germo* who recites a mantra while circling the *Blabar Janur Kuning* accompanied by the singing of *Panjak Hore* and continued by the release of *Jaranan* dancers to dance (Khusnawiyah, 2019). The difference between the *Jaranan* dance in Sandur before and now lies in the actions of the dancers. In the past, dancers performed dance moves by being possessed by spirits, now dancers learn certain choreography without any trance.

The core of the Sandur performance begins after the *Jaranan* dance. *Panjak Hore* will sing the song *Paras* just as the puppet children are doing their makeup. According to Budiono (Interview May 22, 2021), during the make-up process, the audience is prohibited from entering the make-up room. This is done so that there is an element of surprise in the show.

The four puppet children, *Balong*, *Pethak*, *Tangsil*, and *Cawik* will enter *Blabar Janur Kuning* together with make-up with a veil. Before the veil was opened, *Germo* started doing *Nggundhisi*, which is to tell the journey of 44 nymphs who came down to earth. After that, *Panjak Hore* will sing the Corn Song (*tembang jagung*) and the veil that covers the puppets will be removed.

Panjak Hore will continue to sing the song *Udeng Gadung* and the four puppet children will dance around *Blabar Janur Kuning* three times. After that, Sandur's story will begin. The standard story for Sandur is agricultural activities such as farming or looking for work. *Pethak* is described as a village youth who does not own a field, so he goes to *Tangsil* to ask for a job, but is not given a job. Finally, *Pethak* worked in the *Balong* rice fields to cultivate crops. During the show, Sandur was led by *Germo* as the director.

The Sandur show closed with *Kalongking*. *Kalongking* is generally displayed at midnight, which is why it is called *Kalongking*. The *Kalongking* show is usually a performance that is awaited by the audience, namely *Panjak Kalongking* performing an attraction on a rope tied to two bamboos. *Panjak Kalongking* is believed to have been possessed by a spirit during the show. At the current Sandur show, *Kalongking* is rarely shown. Instead, a *Gunjhing Bhito* performance was held, in which *Cawik* danced on the shoulder of one of the *Panjak Hure*. There is one day

which is considered as a sacred day for the local community, on which the Sandur performance is not performed, namely on *Jumat Legi* (Friday Legi).

At the current Sandur show, the stories presented are more in line with the current community developments so they are not considered out of date. Firdaus & Sukmawan (2021) revealed that the Sandur Kembang Desa group is a group consisting of young people who care about the sustainability of Sandur art. The group is guided by senior Sandur players in developing and innovating Sandur performances. The innovations carried out were shortening the duration of the show, processing the story of Sandur's play into a story based on the problems of modern society, and eliminating the sacred element, so that the Sandur performance performed by the group was purely a play performance.

Javanese Philosophy Embodied in Sandur's Art

Based on the Indonesian Dictionary (Kurniawan, 2017) philosophy is the most basic assumptions, ideas, and inner attitudes possessed by an individual or a group of people that are used as views of life. A society tends to live based on the philosophy they profess. In this case, philosophy is used as the basis for making decisions. For the Javanese people, especially the indigenous people, they respect their ancestors (*dhanyang*) and hold the principle that philosophy is a good thing to be embraced as a form of ancient advice. Wisdom in the philosophy adopted by the community produces a view of life. People's belief in ancestors affects the life order of a community group, including the traditions adopted (Andalas, 2017).

The Bojonegoro community as a society that has various traditions, makes these traditions a way of life. The basic inner attitude possessed by the people of Bojonegoro is reflected in every tradition they have, one of which is Sandur. Sandur art as a tradition is carried out routinely as a ritual that tells about the life of the farming community and the gap to modernity (Rohmat, 2017).

In Sandur art, there are Javanese cultural values that are contained and become people's views of life. These values are reflected in every procession and performance of Sandur.

Religious Values in Sandur

The religious value in the Sandur performance is reflected in the pre-show procession and the core of the show. In the pre-show process, there are several rituals performed by Sandur players, namely the *Setren* ritual and the *Buka Bumi* ritual. The *setren* ritual is carried out to clean oneself and the performance equipment, while the *Buka Bumi* ritual is carried out to ask for prayers and a form of permission from the players to God and the *dhanyang* so that the show will run smoothly. In addition, religious values are also found at the core of the show, namely the *Nggundhisi* ritual when players enter the *blabar janur kuning*, chanting mantras, and songs. These rituals are carried out because the local community believes, before carrying out or when carrying out a performance, the performers, equipment, and the location of the performance must be in a holy state, so that people carry out rituals aimed at praying to God.

Human values in Sandur

Sandur has a variety of play stories. This applies to both the original Sandur story and the modern Sandur story. In the story, human values are reflected in the core of the story, such as tolerance, mutual respect, and social care. These values can be seen in Sandur's dialogues delivered by *anak wayang* (actors), as in the scene where Pethak, who is younger than Balong, is always considered inferior. They were finally advised by Germo to be tolerant to each other.

Spiritual Value in Sandur

Spiritual value is a value that comes from the human soul and is related to human attitudes. These values are reflected in Sandur, such as sincerity, relief, and patience. This can

be seen in the scenes played by wayang children, such as the patience of Pethak and Balong in looking for work.

Worldly Values in Sandur

Worldly values are values related to one's response to worldly problems. These values are reflected in every scene of Sandur, such as simplicity, independence, hard work, and humility. Worldly value is a value that is used by society in carrying out the life of the world. In Sandur, this value is like Pethak's hard work in cultivating rice fields.

The Relevance of Javanese Philosophy in Sandur as a Way of Life for the Bojonegoro Society

Javanese philosophy covers various dimensions of life. These dimensions include etiquette, the relationship between parents and children, law, justice, social relations, kinship, mutual cooperation, tolerance, and others (Widodo et al., 2017). Based on this, the Javanese philosophy contained in Sandur cannot be separated from the life of the people of Bojonegoro. This is because the art of Sandur was created from the daily life of the people of Bojonegoro, which at first only described farming activities. However, with the times, Sandur adapts to other activities in society without losing its authenticity. Thus, Sandur was able to adapt to the life of the people of Bojonegoro.

Sanduras a culture that is closely related to people's lives, is used as a guide or way of life for the Bojonegoro people. The relevance of Javanese philosophy in Sandur includes belief in ancestors, simplicity, tolerance for others, and so on.

Philosophy of Obedience to God and Ancestors

Obedience to God is an important and main value in human life which is contained in one's religiosity. Religiosity according to Aviyah and Farid (Aviyah & Farid, 2014) is the internalization of religious values in a person in relation to one's obedience to God and belief in religious teachings both in the heart, as well as in speech and action. In addition, the people of Bojonegoro, especially the indigenous people, have a belief in their ancestors. As a society that adheres to religious beliefs and routinely carries out traditions, the traditional rituals of the Bojonegoro community cannot be separated from prayers that are expressed as a form of gratitude.

"Sandur's traditional function is to express gratitude. For example, when someone wants to build a house, the land to be used is cleared by holding the Sandur art. Inside Sandur there are prayers such as rejecting the time. Reject kala is used to clean up sengkala or distress in that place."

(ASB, Interview 22 May 2021)

Sandur has a function as a medium to express gratitude (Herfidiyanti, 2014). In addition, the Sandur art performance section also contains elements of prayer, such as rejecting the time that is used to clean up the dangers that exist in Sandur's staging area.

Philosophy of Respect for Women

Javanese people, especially indigenous peoples, have a belief that women are a disgrace. Therefore, in the artistic tradition of Javanese society, many do not display women as players. This is to respect and protect a woman. In Sandur art before the 1970s, women were forbidden to play, so the female characters were played by men.

"In the past, Cawik players were male. But there was a transformation in the 1970s in Bojonegoro that allowed female players to participate as puppet children, namely Cawik. In the story, the character Cawik, played by a woman, is at Germa's house to be guarded. This is done to maintain the dignity of women."

(ASB, Interview 22 May 2021)

This philosophy can be used as a way of life and change people's way of thinking that considers women as the lowest class on the gender scale. This can be seen in the character Cawik. Cawik is a woman who has a graceful, charismatic character, and is told to always be at Germo's house. This illustrates the preservation of a woman's dignity.

Philosophy About Social Values

Social value is the value that underlies the social life of the community. These values include human values, spiritual values, and worldly values. The Bojonegoro community is known as a humble, humble, hardworking, and harmonious society among others (Warsiman, 2015). These values as a way of life of the people of Bojonegoro are reflected in the art of Sandur.

"For example, Pethak who is younger is often looked down upon by Balong, then Pethak gets angry and wants to go out of town. Then, Germo will give advice, that in life it is forbidden to be jealous and do not easily sulk. Traditional values still exist in Sandur's art, such as the values of honesty, independence, responsibility."

(ASB, Interview 22 May 2021)

The attitude of being tolerant, not envious, and honest is an attitude that is firmly held by the people of Bojonegoro. Warsiman (Warsiman, 2015) in Sandur art, this is reflected in the scenes performed by wayang children. In addition to this attitude, the people of Bojonegoro are known as hard-working people.

The standard stories of Sandur are inseparable from the life of farming and looking for work (Herfidiyanti, 2014). On the other hand, most of the people of Bojonegoro work as farmers or farm laborers. However, because agricultural land is decreasing, many people are changing professions. However, these things do not reduce the work ethic of the Bojonegoro people.

"This cawik stands for cagak kawidhatan (center of attention). Pethak is an abbreviation of mepet bathak which is a symbol of a character who is intelligent, hardworking, tough and active. Balong itself stands for Babatan ingkang bolong which means the five senses, here he has a more sensitive and gentle character. Tangsil is also an abbreviation of Wat-watan kang angsil which means there will be results, or he is here acting as a seeker of a way out of existing problems, because he is the wisest character."

(ODC, Interview 5 May 2021)

The social values in Sandur are also reflected in the characteristics of each puppet child. For example, in the story where Pethak sulked and wanted to run away from the city which was then prevented by Germo. At that time Germo gave advice that in life it is forbidden to be jealous and not to be easily irritated. This can teach the community, especially the younger generation to have a tough character, not to be jealous, and envious which can harm themselves. The characters in Sandur have different characters with the intention of giving teachings to the community, especially to the younger generation.

CONCLUSION

Sandur is a traditional theater art that grows and develops in the area of an agrarian society, one of which is Bojonegoro. Sandur as a traditional art contains cultural values which are the philosophy of life for the people of Bojonegoro. The philosophy contained in Sandur includes religious values, human values, spiritual values, and worldly values. These values are reflected in every Sandur procession, both pre-show and the core of the show. The wisdom of Javanese philosophy contained in Sandur is attached to the daily life of the Bojonegoro people, so that philosophy becomes the guide for its adherents in carrying out life.

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