REOG: UNIQUE DANCE

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Abstract
There are many traditions in Indonesia as Indonesia consists of many different cultures. These are the reason why Indonesia becomes unique in the eyes of others. Thus the government should try to empower the local to maintain their traditions in accordance to modern life. One of many cultures is represented in the shape of art, such: painting, dance, song, sculpture, etc. These are what attract the tourists to come to Indonesia. One of the beautiful dances that exist in Indonesia is reog dance. In order to maintain the existence, we should learn how this dance tells a story. We should learn the history of this dance. By doing so, it is possible that we will love more about this special dance. We will be amazed knowing that this dance could be performed by some men that have special ability. This ability could be gained through special debarment. In writing this thesis, the writer wants to build the awareness of the Indonesians towards their rich culture. From the various field observations, the writer is aware that there is only a little group of people really understand about the subject. In presenting the material in some occasions, such as in classes, the writer tries to acknowledge the students about how important it is to comprehend and love our own culture in order to maintain the richness of our nation.

Keywords: reog, culture, dance, local wisdom.

I. INTRODUCTION

Many people do understand about reog. But their knowledge is shallow. They know that reog is performance art from Ponorogo. That is all they know. When Malaysia claims that reog belongs to them, many Indonesians furious with them. They are angry as they consider reog belongs to Indonesia, especially Ponorogo. But when they are being asked about the history of reog, a lot of people do not understand.

Reog is performance art uniquely comes from Ponorogo. There are some versions that tell about the origin of reog. From those versions, two versions being the most common told in the society. The first is about Ki Ageng Kutu who is disappointed with the King of Majapahit, Prabu Brawijaya V. the second is about the King Sewondono from Jenggala Kingdom who wants to marry Princess Dewi Sanggalangit from Kediri Kingdom. The first version is believed as an ancient legend. While the later is created by the government to eliminate the negatives side of reog.

Now, there are 21 districts in Ponorogo. These districts is divided into 26 sub districts and 279 villages. Then every village has a reog troop. When there is Grebeg
Suro (Javanese new year), every reog troop competes in the festival representing their villages. Then these reog troops get support from the village. But in this modern time, a lot of reog troops disappear because there is no fund. The existing reog troops, the members of the troops do not exclusively dedicate their life in reog. They have other jobs to support themselves and their family.

Now at Javanese New Year (Suro) there is reog festival. But the contestants are reogs that do not exclusively represent their villages. Reog troops nowadays compete in the Suro festival when there is fund from a wealthy person or a company or an institution. Thus contemporary reog troops represent certain individual or company or institution. They no longer represent their villages exclusively.

At Suro, reog festival is officially held by the city. The government states that there are three goals in conducting this reog festival. These goals are for entertaining the people, reviving the local tradition, and preserving the national culture for the next generations.

The coming of Islam also has influences toward reog existence. In reog troops there is a character named warok. Warok is a man who has a special power. This power will disappear when he is conducting a relation with a woman. Thus warok takes a boy as a replacement of a woman. The coming of islam in Indonesia influence this condition. Islam considers warok is not appropriate with the life of moslems. Thus Islam tries to wipe out the existence of waroks in particular, and reog in general.

II. PNENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The life-world is a key concept and focus of investigation for phenomenology. The life-world comprises the world of objects around us as we perceive them and our experience of our self, body and relationships. It is the “locus of interaction between ourselves and our perceptual environments and the world of experienced horizons within which we meaningfully dwell together”. It can be defined as the world that is lived and experienced - a world “that appears meaningfully to consciousness in its qualitative, flowing given-ness; not an objective world ‘out there’, but a humanly relational world”.

III. READING ETHNICITY

Ethnicity is more subjectively defined. Most sociologists are more comfortable in engaging in scientific discourses that refers to ethnicity. Also, although sometimes defined by geographical locations in areas with minimal physical mobility, ethnicity is largely a matter of personal preference. Although similar to the construction of race, social stratification theory shows that an ethnic group refers to discernable differences in cultural mores, such as dialect, religion, and traditions, and sometimes physical characteristics such as skin color and body shape.

IV. REYOG

1. THE LEGEND

In old times reog is functioned as a tool to gather mass and is considered an effective way of communication for the leader. Ki Ageng Mirah (the vice of adipati batorokatong) creates a legend about Bantarangin kingdom which is believed as a history for Ponorogo people. Adipati Batorokatong (the leader of ponorogo 500 years
ago) who is islam also functions reog as a media to spread islam the way of life. The name singo barongan is changed into reog which comes from riyqun which means khusnul khotimah (although live sinfully in his life, but if in the end he dedicates himself to the lord thus he will get into heaven). From then on reog is developing from time to time. The story of reog is following Ki Ageng Mirah’s creation that is passed mouth to mouth, generation to generation.

There many versions of stories which tell the origin of reog. Here the writer presents some of them.

The first version: Prabu Klono Sewondono from Bantarangin Kingdom wants to marry Dewi Songgolangit from Kediri Kingdom. There is also Singo Lodro from Blitar Kingdom who wants to marry Dewi Songgolangit too. On the way to Kediri Kingdom, Prabu Klono Sewondono is intercepted by Singo Lodro. The two of them got into a battle. Prabu Klono Sewondono wins the battle. Prabu Klono Sewondono takes Singo Lodro to Kediri with accompanied by gamelan music and paraded with beautiful girls riding horses. Singo Lodro is become a wonderful spectacle and is presented to Dewi Songgolangit. Incidentally there is a peacock perches in Singo Lodro’s head. The scene becomes more entertaining. That is how reog was born.

The second version: it comes from the legend of Panji. Prabu Kelana Sewandana of Bantarangin Kingdom is looking for his princess. With horse troops and his loyal general Bujangganong, he search everywhere. Finally he chose his bride wannabe, Princess Dewi Sanggalangit of Kediri Kingdom. But the princess requires him to create a new performance art before she accepts his love. Thus he creates reog.

The third version: King Sewondono of Jenggala Kingdom is rejected by Dewi Sanggalangit of Kediri Kingdom. The princess asks Sewondono to move the whole jungle into the castle as a dowry. For doing so, Sewondono must conquer the king of the jungle (singo barong/dadak merak). But this is not easy. The waroks, soldiers, and generals of Jenggala become victims. With the magic weapon samandiman, sewondono conquers singo barong.

The fourth version: Demang Ki Ageng Kutu Suryonggalan criticizes the king of Majapahit, Prabu Brawijaya V. the king is controlled by the queen. Thus Suryonggalan creates barongan which is made from the skin of macangembong (Javanese tiger) which is ridden by a peacock. The tiger symbolize the king and the peacock symbolize the queen. For safety, Suryonggalan protects barongan with trained army consists of powerful warok troop.

2. THE PERFORMANCE

Modern reog usually performs in events such as wedding ceremony, circumcision ceremony, and national holiday. The dances in reog describe the human behavior in their life from they were born till they are death. It has deep philosophy. A group of reog consists of old warok, some young waroks, jatilan, pembarong, bujangganong, and prabu kelono sewondono. The total is 20 – 30 people. The central characters are warok and pembarong. The characters are:

Prabu Kelono Sewondono: he is the main character. He is described as a brave and wise king. The performer uses wings and red mask. He has a magic weapon called Pecut Samandiman.
Patih Bujangganong: he is Prabu Kelono Sewandono’s general. He is also the protagonist. He is described as small and short but clever and active. Patih Bujangganong is also called penthulan. He wears red vest and red mask.

Jathil or jathilan: it is a group of girl warriors riding horses. They are described as brave and beautiful. They wear white satin shirt and batik. They also wear udheng on their head and rides fake horse (horses made of bamboo).

Warok: they are Prabu Kelono Sewandono’s army who has magic power and sharp-weapon-proof. All of them are male and have big appearances. They wear black clothes (big loose pants and unbuttoned shirt). The costume is called penadhon. Now penadhon is used as official traditional clothes of Ponorogo Regency. Waroks are divided into two, namely old waroks and young waroks. The difference is in their costume. Old waroks wear white shirt inside penadhon and bring a stick. Young waroks do not wear white shirt and do not bring a stick. Their magic weapon is thick white belt (tali kolor).

Pembarong: he is the most important character in reog. Pembarong is a dancer who brings dadak merak mask. Dadak merak mask is lion head crowned with peacock feathers. Its height is about 2 m and its weight is about 50 kg. Pembarong wears balck pants and kimplong (one shoulder shirt). He must bite the wood inside the lion mask to hold dadak merak. Pembarong must be strong. He must lower dadak merak touching the ground and lift it up in upright position. Dadak merak is symbol for singo barong. Generally it is dadak merak that makes reog ponorogo becomes unique because of its very big mask and its deep philosophy. That is why pembarong must have the profound skill and ability to control and handle singo barong. Pembarong must have extra power. He must have a strong jaw to hold the biting of dadak merak. It is believed that pembarong uses magic power to gain the extra power, one of the magics is called susuk that is placed in pembarong’s neck. Pembarong does not only need strong body but he also has to have “wahyu”. In pembarong society, ‘wahyu’ is considered significant factor in their live. Without wahyu, the pembarong’s dance will not be elegant and will not nice to watch. But now pembarong’s mysticism is replaced by rationalism.

The sequences of the performance are as follow: warok, jatilan, bujangganong, kelana sewandana, barongan or dadak merak. When one of the characters perform its part, the others are also dancing accordingly.

There are three parts of opening dance. The first is performed by 6-8 big men with black clothes, red painted faces. They represent the brave lions. The second part is 6-8 girls perform hobby horse dance (in traditional reog, they used to be pretty boys). The dance is called jaran kepang dance, different from kuda lumping dance. The third part is a funny dance from a little boy.

The main part of the performance depends on the event. If it is wedding ceremony thus the story is about love scene. If it is circumcision ceremony thus the story is about a warrior. The scenario is not strictly designed. There is always interaction between the characters and the master of ceremony (the leader of reog troop), and sometimes with the audience. Sometimes a performer can be replaced by others when he is tired. The important thing in reog performance is the audience’s satisfaction.
The last is singa barong. The performer uses a big lion mask crowned with peacock feathers. The weight of this mask is about 50 - 60 kg. This mask is held with teeth. The ability to handle this heavy mask is through heavy training, and some believe that the ability is gained through spiritual ceremony such as fasting and meditation.

3. TIME LINE

The existence or reog from old days up to now can be summarized as follows:

- 1912 Reog is considered as entertainment.
- 1912-1932 Dutch colonial government prohibited reog as they considered waroks as indiscipline.
- 1948 Indonesia Communist Party was born.
- 1950-1960 PKI used reog as a tool to spread their propaganda.
- 1965 The massacre - the government banned PKI and also reog as reog is its tool to spread their propaganda.
- 1970 The New Order
- 1971 Nahdatul Ulama performed Reog
- 1977 INTI (Insan Taqwa Illah) cleaned up all reog troops.
- 1980 Archeological finding – Wengker Kingdom
- 1983 Petrus Mysterious shooting
- 1983 Gemblaks is replaced by girls
- 1985 Education and Culture Departement of East Java officially chose reog as the official art form for the Ponorogo regency
- 1991 The legend of Kelono Sewondono – Sanggalangit is performed in wayang uwong style.
- 1998 Suharto hired thugs dressed in warok to intimidate the protestors.

4. WAROK/GEMBLAK

Dancers traditionally performed in trance, and were expected to follow strict rules, rituals and exercises, including sexual abstinence from women. Gemblak boys of eight to fifteen lived in the households of waroks who compensated the boy's family, and arranged the young man's marriage when he matured. Though never spoken of as homosexuals in this context, waroks and gemblaks were assumed to be sexually intimate by a society in which same-sex relationships, if discreet, were considered normal and acceptable among unmarried men --in contrast to heterosexual relations outside marriage, viewed as immoral and spiritually debilitating. Endowed with male and female elements in a single entity, the gemblak represented a "complementarity of opposites" - cosmic unity. Seen to possess powers of fertility they might also be invited to share the wedding bed of a bride and groom. But with tradition gone, and new gay/western concepts of homosexual identity in vogue, the special status of the young men has been lost, and financial rewards rather than spiritual aspiration became the greater motivation.

Waroks of old were said to practice rasa sejati, a Sanskrit-derived Javanese term for awareness of the fundamental energy within all life; a tantric discipline by which a beautiful youth is transformed by the mystic's gaze, revealing perfection within created form. Such customs, once familiar to Sufis among other Islamic communities, are now abhorrent to mainstream Islam and Christianity, and relationships are discouraged by
government and religious authorities. Waroks now cast themselves as civic-minded village elders helping disadvantaged youths, and young men's dance roles are usually played by girls.

Now warok is still considered as a trustworthy person in the society in Ponorogo Regency. His closeness with spiritual world makes people ask him advice about live, how to make life harmonious and in accordance with Lord. Warok must master Reh Kamusankan Sejati (the genuine way of human being).

Warok is troop of righteousness in the fight between right and wrong in the story of reog. Old warok is the protector while the young waroks is still in power acquiring stage. Up till now it is believed that warok must have a magic power. Thus it creates bad images for them. The stereotype of warok are wearing kolor, black costume, having magic power, and having gemblak. Warok is not people who like to boast his power. Warok is a person who has a pure intention, ready to give advice and guidance willingly. The word warok comes from wewarah (teaching). Warok is a person who has many guidances. It means becoming warok is because of the ability to give guidance and teaching to others about who to live in a good way. Warok is a person who has a perfect behavior and it is in their heart.

There are some requirements becoming a warok. The body must be clean as it will be filled. Warok must be able to control his desire, hunger, thirst, and does not allow touching women. He also must provide a cock, 2,5 m of mori, pandanus mat, and having selamatan. After than the warok candidate will be given various powers, both physically and mentally. After mastering the power, he will be inaugurated as a true warok. He gets a weapon called kolor wasiat (a long white string, the main weapon for warok). The true warok is only a legend now. Some waroks in certain area still practice their tradition and are considered the elders and respected. Even some government officers ask advice to them.

Besides those requirements mentioned above, there is gemblakan. In old days a warok is known for having many gemblaks (boys of 12-15 years old). Gemblaks should have pretty faces and are kept as lovers. Sometimes waroks give more attention to their gemblaks than their wives and children. Having gemblaks is tradition that strongly rooted in reog community. For waroks, it is considered normal and is accepted by the society. Reputedly there is a quarrel between waroks fighting for favorite gemblak. Besides, there is a tradition of lending and borrowing gemblak. The fund for gemblak is not cheap. If the gemblak is a student, warok must provide the tuition for the school beside his daily food and a place to live. If the gemblak is not attending any school, the warok must provide a cow every year. In Ki Ageng Suryonggalan tradition, the magic power could be gained if warok willingly does not have sexual relation with women. Reputedly that is a must that comes from the guru for obtaining the magic power.

For warok, the tradition of keeping gemblak is believed to maintain his magic power. Besides, it is believed that having sexual relation with women (although his own wife) can reducing the power. Mutual care, mutual love, and try to please each other are the characteristics of the relation between gemblak and warok. Gemblakan practice is identified as homosexual because waroks are not allowed to have sexual relation with women.

There is the difference between gemblak in old times and gemblak nowadays. Now it is difficult to find gemblaks. The tradition of keeping gemblaks is fading.
Gemblaks who used to be jathilan dancers now are replaced by girls. Whereas there is no women at all in reog groups in old times.

V. CONCLUSION

Reog artists graduating from art schools contribute in developing the reog dance. The students of art school introduce the esthetics of stage art and choreographic moves. Thus reog dance is having festival format like it is now. There is the plot of the story, sequences who perform first, namely: warok, jatilan, bujangganong, klana sewandana, and barongan/dadak merak in the end. When one of the characters performs his part, the others also dance in the back. Some years ago Ponorogo Reog Foundation establishes Paguyuban Reog Nusantara whose members consist of reog groups from all over Indonesia that take part in National Reog Festival. Reog ponorogo is open for enrichment and changing in movements.

One of the characteristics of Ponorogo Regency of east Java is Reog. Reog is considered associating with black magic, thugs, mystic world, and supernatural power. Reog boasts pembarong’s prowess in lifting 50 kg dadak merak with his teeth as long as the performance. The accompanying instruments are kempul, ketuk, kenong, genggam, ketipung, angklung, and the most important is salompret which makes slendro and pelog tunes which creates mystic, unique, exotic atmosphere and rising the spirit. One reog group consists of old warok, young waroks, pembarong, bujang ganong, and prabu kelono sewondono. The total is about 20-30 people. The main characters are warok and pembarong.

Now the existence of reog is not purely as art as it is then. Many institutions use function reog for their benefits. One of these institutions is the government. The government functions reog to promote the local culture. Besides, the government also uses reog to spread the programs and information about development.

The word reog comes from reyog. The word reyog represents macapat song. It says rasa kidung (the sound of a song) engwang sukma adiluhung (comes from the Lord) Yang Widhi (the almighty) olah kridaning gusti (who arranges everything) gelar gulung kersaning kang maha kuasa (everything is in the hand of the almighty).

The changing from reyog becomes reog is because of interest in the government. Then, the running Bupati of Ponorogo Regency Markum Singodimejo creates “reog” and chose it as official slogan of Ponorogo Regency. Reog stands for resik (clean) endah (beautiful) omber (wide) girang gemirang (happy). The clothes of warok is called penadhon. Now penadhon is used as official traditional clothes of Ponorogo Regency.

There are two other types of reog, namely banjarharjo reog and sunda reog. These are different from ponorogo reog. Banjarharjo reog is played by two men wearing mask, one symbolize good and the other symbolize bad. The good wears pentul mask, the bad wears barongan mask. These two characters fight during the performance. The story is about the ghost who live in a certain house or place. When a family moves into the house, pentul comes to cast out the barongan. The two get into fight and in the end the pentul will win. This performance is accompanied with seven musicians and a sinden. Four musicians play kendang, one musician plays trumpet, one musician plays gong, and one musician plays kecrek.
Sunda reog is introduced by police group in 1967. This performance uses dogdog or gendang accompanied by funny dance and jokes from the performers. Usually the jokes are about social and religious messages. This performance consists of four members, a dalang, his vice, and two servants. Dalang plays 20 cm dogdog called tilingtingtit. His vice plays 25 cm dogdog called panempas. The first servant plays 30-35 cm dogdog called bangbrang. The second servants plays 45 cm dogdog called badublag. The duration of the performance is about 1-1.5 hour.

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