

The values of character education in the tale of Maling Kenthiri in the kentrung performance in Blora, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: This paper is about to reveal the character education value of the Maling Kenthiri fairy tale in Blora Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The Maling Kenthiri fairy tale, was originally spoken by parents to children and grandchildren. In the development of the Maling Kenthiri fairy tale, it was staged in the art of kentrung. In the story, it is mentioned that Maling Kenthiri committed theft in the house of rich people, but the stolen goods were not for himself, but were used to help the poor. In the course of his life, he stopped to plunder other people's property, and become a devout human worshipping God. To reveal the value of character education is used in the interpretation of the tale text of Maling Kenthiri's life, especially the interaction with the poor in the rural areas of Blora, Central Java, Indonesia. Since the fairy tale of Maling Kenthiri is always read in the kentrung performance, the kentrung performance is also described in this paper. The results of this paper show that in the Maling Kenthiri fairy tale there are values of character education. These values are revealed in the course of Maling Kenthiri's life, which is social care for the poor, and contains a religious message that is to realize repentance.

1 INTRODUCTION

Blora Regency has a very diverse culture, which is the result of community life activities from the past until now. As explained in Article 32 of the 1945 Constitution, national culture is a culture that arises as the result of the cultivation efforts of all people in Indonesia. The cultivation of people is a manifestation of the four cultural elements that are initiative, creation, feeling, and human works in community life. The manifestation of initiative, creation, feeling, and the work of the nation has the effort to form human beings to develop the prestige and dignity as a nation, and is directed to provide insight and meaning to national development in all sectors of life in the nation.

For outsiders, the Blora area is a barren and remote area, and not touched by industrialization. In addition, people of Blora are considered to love to talk loudly, be rough, have unruly behavior and other unpleasant stigma. It is reflected in daily behavior. All that stigma was denied by Suripan Sadi Hutomo, a humanistic folklore expert, who is also a Blora-born person. According to him, Blora as a sub-culture area keeps various potential human resources that deserve to be developed, ranging from the legendary characters (such as Samin Surosentika, Naya Gimbal, *Maling Kenthiri*), folklore performing arts (*tayub*, *barongan*, *reyog*, *orek-orek*, *kethoprak*, *Wayang kulit*, *wayang krucil*, and *kentrung*) to fairy tales (Hutomo 1996). In the case of archipelago oral

literature, various kinds of fairy tales can be found. Starting from the folks that tell about the origin of the name of a region, the occurrence of an area (lake, mountain, crater, river), rebellions and heroism, to social bandit stories. Blora, as an area that is far from the center of Mataram culture (Kraton Yogyakarta and Surakarta), turned out to save a variety of fairy tales attached to the villagers. Those tales have influenced the life of Blora society.

Based on this, the content of fairy tales is the result of cultivation of villagers in the Blora area that also contains the four elements of that culture that reflects the noble values of the nation, which must be maintained, nurtured, and developed, in order to strengthen the personality. The four elements of culture that are reflected in the first and foremost fairy tale is the existence of good desire and will, then the desire is manifested by creating something that is followed by human feeling, and realized in the form of art work. In accordance with what is said by Hartoko (1991), culture is a cultural activity that has the spirit to develop the degree of humanity, then the cultural result in the form of art works has a very reliable and positive role and can form attitudes and behavior of the community.

Each fairy tale actualizes the concept of life presented as a moral teaching. In addition, there are also teachings or values such as aesthetic, ethical, didactic, mystical, educational, and religious. All of these are noble values that are priceless. The values mentioned above can actually be summarized into

aesthetic, moral, and conceptual values. These values are a content value that serves as a message from a fairy tale. Among aesthetic, moral, and conceptual values, they are difficult to separate. Something aesthetic is something that has a moral value. There is no beauty without morals. Morals are not just politeness or etiquette, but a stem from the values of humanity, as well as good and bad in common.

Aesthetic value in a fairy tale is not only found in the structure of its work alone, but can be found in its contents, which consists of themes and mandates. Moral values will be seen in attitudes toward what is expressed, while the conceptual value will be seen in society's view roundly toward the issues expressed in the fairy tales being presented. The presentation of fairy tales can be done verbally, and also can be presented through the performing arts, such as *kethoprak*, *wayang krucil*, and *kenrung*.

The treasury of traditional performing arts in Blora district is diverse, but the performing art that recently got the spotlight from the society, the government and the mass media, is the *kenrung* art. This art is speech or oral art performances of stories containing life and moral advice. The stories are sung in Blora's typical language while accompanied by tambourine. Art *kenrung* is not only in Blora, but also in Rembang, Jepara, Demak, Tuban, Lamongan, Malang, and Blitar.

In the show, the art of *kenrung* uses music to accompany the story told by the puppeteer. *Kenrung* in its form is included in the area of folklore art, which laid a power base on the spiritual, where myth and belief become the buffer element. In Jepara, *kenrung* is one form of folklore art that still survives in public life. (Wrahatnala 2015). But in Blora, *kenrung* needs to get special handling, because people have rarely called *kenrung* necessary like in the 1970's.

There are several studies that have been conducted regarding this research topic, for example Huto-mo (1993) on *Kenrung Sarahwulan* Story in Tuban. He describes the development of *kenrung* art in Tuban, but has not discussed his development efforts to instill a moral education to the younger generation. His writing on the *parikan* text *kenrung* has been a lot, but it still needs to be followed up with the effort of utilization or relevance of the *parikan-parikan* with the level of young generation soul development. Similarly, Sugiarto et al. (1998) on the description of *kenrung* art in Blora, has described the development of *kenrung* art and the need of help from the government. This research has described the development and history of the birth of art *kenrung* in Blora, but this research has not linked the development of art *kenrung*, especially the development related to the effort to cultivate character education for the young generation, whereas the ethical value can be known from the message contained in the story that was delivered. In the art of *kenrung* there are

various values such as the value of character education of Java culture, the value of *pantun* literature (*parikan*), the value of religion (Islam), and other value which is very high.

Connecting from these *kenrung* researches, whose results have described history, form of performance, fairy texts in *kenrung* performances and the one that has not been revealed are the values of character education. Therefore, in this paper, the values of character education is expressed in a fairy tale that is performed through the art of *kenrung*. The fairy tale that is told is the fairy tale of *Maling Kenthiri*.

2 DISCUSSION

2.1 *The form of kenrung show*

2.1.1 *Performer and musical instrument*

The player of *kenrung* amounts to one person. In the show, one player is acting as a puppeteer, story bearer, and as well as a drummer and tambourine player. The religion that is followed by *kenrung* players is Islam. Musical instruments used for *kenrung* performances are: (a) *terbang cilik* 30 cm skin in diameter, (b) *terbang tanggung* 40 skin diameter cm, (c) *terbang gedhe* 50 cm skin in diameter. In short, the puppeteer of *kenrung* should be able to act double, that is to tell stories, sing songs, and play a musical instrument.

2.1.2 *Kenrung Guidebook*

Kenrung handbook is a script of the story that is used as a guide for the *kenrung* puppeteer to tell in *kenrung* performances. The script of the story is written by Sutrisno (late), a *kenrung* puppeteer who come from Blora. The script is written in Javanese Ngoko language with Latin script, Javanese Kromo language with Latin script, and Java language with Javanese script. The manuscript contains the story of the prophet, history, chronicle, and fairy tales. One of the fairy tales that is often presented is the original fairy tale of Blora Regency, the fairy tale of *Maling Kenthiri*. In *kenrung* performances, this manuscript is developed by a *kenrung* puppeteer in the form of *antawacana* (dialogue), *janturan* (story), *pocapan*, and rhyme which is expressed in the form of Javanese song with the tones of *slendro*, *pelog*, and diatonic.

2.1.3 *Dress and stage show*

The clothes worn by the *kenrung* player are: black cap, shirt / muslim dress, sarong and slippers / sandals. But in other occasions, the *kenrung* player is wearing traditional clothes, namely *surjan*, tensile fabric, *blankon* (Javanese traditional cap), and slippers. The performing stage is about 3 m² or 1.5m x 2m in size. The location of this stage can be in front

of a house or inside a resident's home. If it is located in front of the house, the stage is set as high as 60 cm. But if it is in the house, the performing stage is on a couch, bench, or even just on the floor covered by mats or carpet.

2.1.4 Time and form of show

Kentrung performances are usually performed at night. The duration of the show is one hour, two hours, three hours, and even up to seven hours or all night. A *kentrung* performance that lasts only one or two hours is usually for ceremonial removal of *nadar* or *kaulan*. But, it is not infrequent that the *kentrung* performance lasts all night from 21.00 until 04.00. It really depends on the intentions and interests of people who invite *kentrung* performances. The form of *kentrung* performances consists of two parts. First, *Pambuka* (introductory song), without accompaniment by *rebana* instrument, sung by a *kentrung* puppeteer. Second, songs and stories, accompanied by musical instruments expressed by the *kentrung* puppeteer.

2. 2 Maling Kenthiri tale

In the performance of *kentrung* in Blora Regency, there is one story repertoire staged, taken from one of the fairy tales in the Blora area, the fairy tale of *Maling Kenthiri* (Maling Genthiri). The life story of *Maling Kenthiri* is very popular among people in Blora Regency, especially rural communities. It is because in his life, *Maling Kenthiri* helped poor people in rural areas of Blora district. The fairy tale of *Maling Kenthiri* itself comes from several areas, including Blora, Kudus, and Kediri with different versions. Particularly the *Maling Kenthiri* fairy tale originating from the Blora region mentions that *Kenthiri* is considered as a hero or *Ratu Adil*. This cannot be separated from his role which is very important and vital enough in helping the poor in the Blora area, especially in the Sub-district Jepon. He is the son of Kiai Ageng Pancuran who during his life used his high knowledge of science to steal treasures from the rich man's house. The stolen property was then distributed to poor people and people in distress, similar to the story of Robin Hood.

Kenthiri is known by Blora society as someone who has high knowledge. *Maling Kenthiri* has a *Ajian Pancasona* power (similar to the Rahwana story and Angling Darma story in the version of private television). This is the power of *kadigdayan* that allows the owner to live again despite being repeatedly killed, as long as the body remains united and his blood does not touch the ground. *Ajian Pancasona* is a safety power as well as a nutritious protection to protect the body from any injuries. As a term, *aji* means knowledge while *pancasona* consists of two words, namely *panca* which means five and *sona*

means place. Thus, *Aji Pancasona* is a power of *kanuragan* whose power is formed from the combined elements of the power of five places, namely the sky, earth, mountains, oceans and heaven.

As a power of safety and self-protection, *Aji Pancasona* is efficacious to reduce or even eliminate the danger of attacks on a person's body. When he or she is beaten or struck, for example, the owner of *Aji Pancasona* will not be severely injured. It could be just a minor injury or not even hurt at all. Ever since, *Aji Pancasona* has been very famous in the community. In the puppet story, this power is owned by Prabu Rahwana. A person who has *Aji Pancasona* will not die, even though he was shot by the enemy. When he is shot or hit by a sword and his body is destroyed, his scar will disappear and he will live again as before.

In addition, *Maling Kenthiri* can enter the victim's house by passing the spotlight or the light of the lamp coming out of the wall of the house. In general, the walls of rich people's house in the Blora area are made of teak wood, so there is a gap that allows the light from the inside to come out. In the dark night, because there was no electricity then, *Maling Kenthiri* walked to the houses of the rich. Thus, the lights that were coming out of the houses of the rich can be seen from the distance, penetrating the darkness of night. Through the lights of the night, *Maling Kenthiri* entered the house of the rich, and took possessions as much as possible. In carrying out his action, he was never caught because of his incredible power.

Nevertheless, *Kenthiri* actually utilized his power to steal the treasures of the dukes and the rich. This is evidenced by his efforts to help the poor who live in Kawengan to get out of the distress in their lives. Then, he submitted the stolen treasure to the poor who live alone. This is the reason Kawengan people call him by the nickname, "Maling Kenthiri", because during his lifetime, he saw the distress of the poor. Then he used his magical powers to steal treasures from the houses of the rich. However, he did not use the loot for his own sake, but was distributed to poor people who had difficulty meeting the needs of his / her life, and people who were experiencing distress. The story of *Maling Kenthiri* is similar to what Sunan Kalijaga and Robin Hood did. In addition to the community who call him *Maling Kenthiri*, he also earned the nickname as *Ratu Adil* for he tried to divide the properties in a more justly way and help the poor out of the difficulties they faced.

Along with the passage of time, *Kenthiri* was aware that his actions (read: stealing) were a misconduct and violated the law. *Kenthiri* stopped stealing and no longer took other people's possessions. *Kenthiri* and his uncle Jaruman went to meet with Sunan Ngerang in Semarang. *Kenthiri* studied religion diligently and became the student of Sunan

Ngerang. Eventually he became a devout Muslim in the Blora area. In the end, he died and was buried in the Kawengan village, Jepon, Blora (Hutomo, 1996: 78-79).

2.3 The values of character education in the tale of *Maling Kenthiri*

This section discusses the disclosure of character education values that exist in a fairy tale. The messages that are delivered to the public are not distinguished between implied and explicit. The important thing here is, these messages illustrate the values of character education. Due to the many types of character education value, the ones discussed in this opportunity are not all values, but only character education played by *Maling Kenthiri*. This tale is presented to be discussed because up to now it is still staged by the supporting community, both held on open and closed stages or through electronic media such as radio, tape recorder and television in the form of development of performances art packaging.

People who see traditional performing arts such as kethoprak, wayang krucil, and *kenprung* that present the fairy tales of *Maling Kenthiri*, surely want to get a satisfying aesthetic, ethical, and logical experience beside the entertainment. The performance of traditional performing arts does not only emphasize technical matters, but *Maling Kenthiri's* play and its content should get an adequate portion. The play of the fairy tale is the story of *Maling Kenthiri* describing the human life in his work as a wealthy property thief, his concern for helping the poor, and ending as a convert to repentance. It can be pointed out that the contents of the *Maling Kenthiri* fairy tale itself is something that concerns and touches the values of human life, such as the moral value, the religious value, and so on. Each play and its contents are not delivered in form of scientific formulation, but is a message that invites and teaches character education to the community (Ward 2013). The message on the presentation of *Maling Kenthiri* fairy tales is a message that is recommended or prohibited to the public. These messages will affect the attitudes and behavior of the community. As said by Arifin, if character education is given in performing arts, it will have an impact on the audience consisting of various circles, not only in a particular institution or agency (Arifin 2013).

Through *Maling Kenthiri's* activities of stealing and the loot being used to help the poor, he can be viewed as a social bandit. In other places in the world, crime like *Maling Kenthiri's* also exists. E.J. Hobsbawn in his writings "Social Bandits" contained in the book *Kepemimpinan dalam Dimensi Sosial* (Hobsbawn 1994), revealed the figures of bandits in various countries in the world. For example Robin Hood in England, Diego Corrientes in Andalusia (Spain), Janosik in Poland and Slovakia. Many of the bandits (thieves) have become the peo-

ple's legend, because they helped the poor a lot (Hutomo 1996).

Similarly, the legend contained in the village community in Blora district, which is called *Maling Kenthiri* legend. *Maling Kenthiri* is also powerful as a Robin Hood. Due to his power the villagers called him as a *aguna* thief, meaning a powerful thief (thieves who have extraordinary powers). The word *aguna* thief also has the meaning as a useful thief, that is to alleviate the people from poverty or can see the condition of the deficient people so he tries to help to overcome poverty. Villagers of Blora district call *Maling Kenthiri* as the savior or *Ratu Adil*, because of his vital role in helping to eradicate poverty in the city of Blora. Some even call him as a hero, because he fights for the plight of the poor.

A social bandit, as a type of structure of social leadership naturally arises in the gaps of social space in which the official ruler cannot supervise (Kartodirdjo 1984). The role of social bandit groups is "counter-elite" that moves underground so that it is a "latent" threat to those in power. A person becomes a bandit because he does something that the customs in his area does not regard as a crime, but the state or local ruler who thinks it against the law. (Hobsbawn 1994). Thus, the status of a bandit in the perspective of his society is considered as a hero, while in the perspective of the ruler, it is considered as a dissident.

In addition to the educational value of a social caring character, the story of *Maling Kenthiri* also found the value of religious character education (Gbaden 2014). In the story, it is mentioned that over the course of time, *Kenthiri* felt that exploiting his power to steal the rich man's possessions would not be for long. *Kenthiri* realized that the act of stealing was wrong and illegal. *Kenthiri* converted and no longer took other people's possessions. *Kenthiri* complained to his uncle, Jaruman, that his behavior had not been good. Every time he stole the rich's possessions, he was being chased by the soldiers. He felt it was time to convert. *Kenthiri* and his uncle Jaruman went to meet with Sunan Ngerang in Semarang. After becoming the student (*santri*) of Sunan Ngerang, *Kenthiri* studied the religion diligently. In a short time, he could master the science of religion. He said goodbye to Sunan Ngerang to return to Blora. *Kenthiri* became a devout Muslim in his village. He died and was buried in the village of Kawengan, Jepon, Blora.

The fairy tale *Maling Kenthiri* is often spoken orally, but also performed in traditional art performances such as kethoprak, wayang krucil, *kenprung*, and not to forget the values of character education as the spotlight (Mahgoub 2015). The values of character education can be interpreted as a social aid so that the individual can change in living his freedom in living with others. As in character education which aims to form a person into a personal who has

virtue, in this scope, it does not only deal with the inculcation of character education values alone but it is also a joint venture to create an environment of society that puts every individual into his freedom as a precondition for mature moral life. Thus, character education can be seen as a human effort to create a culture of life that supports individual growth authentically (Koesoema 2007).

Character development is a holistic approach that links the moral dimension to the social realm of the learner's life. The basic attitudes and values of the community are identified and strengthened within the scope of schools and communities. Character education is full of values, because society determines what will and will not be emulated. Moral is captured not taught and classroom life is in sync with the moral meaning that forms the learner's character and moral development (Ryan 1996).

3 CONCLUSION

The work of fairy tales is one of the ancestral heritages whose existence is still maintained until now and evolved along with the changing times. All fairy tales performed through *kenrung* art performances, such as the *Maling Kenthiri* fairy tales, can give a message to the Blora community and its surroundings. The storytelling tradition is also a method to deliver the effective moral messages to the Blora community and its surroundings. In addition, it can also be a bridge of effective communication in delivering character education to the community. The tradition of the *Maling Kenthiri* fairy tale that is told by our ancestors passed down through generations can have a tremendous impact on the character development of society.

The values of character education played by *Maling Kenthiri* are diligent in learning *kanuragan* power. Unfortunately, he used the *kanuragan* power to ransack and plunder the wealthy property of the rich. The possessions he had earned were not for the pomp or for himself. This is evidenced by his efforts to help the poor and handed it over to people who live alone. Over the course of time, *Maling Kenthiri* realized that the act of stealing was wrong, so that he converted and no longer took the rights of others. To apply his convictions, he committed repentance and became a devout believer.

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