



## Madurese Local Wisdom Values in the Performing Arts of Masks and Loddrok

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**Abstract:** Cultural preservation is a critical endeavor, especially in a culturally diverse nation like Indonesia. Madurese culture, known for its uniqueness, has been extensively studied, yet ongoing efforts are required to safeguard its local traditions and values. Literature serves as a vital medium for preserving culture, acting as a bridge to transmit and sustain cultural identity. One notable literary work, *Lebur*, exemplifies this by exploring traditional Madurese values. This study aims to promote cultural preservation through arts performances rooted in local Madurese traditions. Employing the Sociology of Literature as the theoretical framework, the research utilizes a descriptive-qualitative methodology. Data sources include field surveys and literature studies, which are subsequently analyzed through sociological perspectives on literature. The findings underscore the pivotal role of arts performance in preserving and promoting Madurese traditional values. By drawing on the rich heritage embedded in local traditions, such performances not only safeguard cultural identity but also enhance societal appreciation for these values. The analysis highlights the sociological significance of integrating traditional values into arts performances as a means of fostering cultural continuity and community engagement. This research contributes to the discourse on cultural preservation, demonstrating how literature and performance art can serve as effective tools for sustaining local traditions. It offers valuable insights for cultural practitioners, educators, and policymakers aiming to develop strategies for preserving Indonesia's diverse cultural heritage.

**Keywords:** Culture, Literature, Madura, Tradition.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Culture is a very essential thing. Culture is the most important indicator that gives unique characteristics to a nation. Culture is a very effective strategy for introducing what we have as a nation which is rich in uniqueness and as a means of learning. The main obstacle experienced by the Indonesian people is related to the field of Culture or Culture, namely that many of our people are still unable to appreciate



and preserve existing culture, both oral culture and literary culture, which is still not evenly distributed. Even though the government has launched a national literacy program, in reality it is still not optimally distributed. This has become a problem that has never been resolved. Literacy problems and lack of respect for one's own culture are big problems that must be resolved.

Madurese culture is one of the many cultures in Indonesia which has its own charm and attraction, one of which is through its literary works. Many literary works are very strong in Madurese culture. Several famous writers from Madura, such as Zawawi Imron, Mahwi Air Tawar and Elok Tedja Suminar, through their works reveal the unique and interesting culture of the Madurese people to study in more depth. Problems related to women, the role of ulama, daily life and livelihoods of Madurese people are things that often appear in Madurese literary works. However, it turns out that there are still many who do not understand Madurese literature in depth.

Apart from literature, Madura is also famous for its unique traditions which have been maintained, such as the rokat tase', molodan, karapan sapeh traditions, etc. This is a sign that upholding culture is very important. Madurese culture and traditions based on local wisdom are very important things to be discussed in depth when connected to the uniqueness of its literary works. According to Ratna (2007: 507) literary works are the result/response of social interaction which shows that literature (music, performing arts, etc.) plays a role in supporting culture.

Madurese culture is very strong with local Islamic boarding school traditions, religion, and the influence of ulama figures which give their own color to the development of Madurese culture. Cultural developments that are closely related to the production of literary works in Madura are interesting. There is a homology or similarity between the parallels in the structure of literary works and the structure of society. The hope is that literary works can become a bridge/tool to preserve culture.

Understanding how to preserve culture is something that is very important to give from an early age considering that Indonesia is a country that has amazing cultural wealth and is recognized worldwide. The lack of understanding of how to preserve culture so that it does not disappear and become extinct is problematic. Therefore, there needs to be a solution to increase the interest of the younger generation, especially in culture through local Madurese literature such as music, performing arts, etc. so that the younger generation will get used to studying Madurese literature and at the same time participate in preserving Madurese culture.

There is also a significant reciprocal relationship between literature and culture. Written culture saved oral literature. This proves that cultural influence is very essential. Without the discovery of writing traditions and technology, it is clear that this cultural heritage would not be accepted by subsequent generations. In the end, literature spreads various messages to society as cultural messages.

Likewise, Madurese culture is spread throughout society and passed down from generation to generation both orally and in writing. This culture spreads and is applied to every aspect of Madurese people's lives. The culture that is a character that is closely attached to the Madurese people is being tenacious, having a high work ethic and being friendly. This is also reflected in how the literary works produced by Madurese writers have strong "Madurese" characteristics. Apart from literature and culture, local traditions and local wisdom values also need to be preserved because they are inherent characteristics of a community in society because the relationship between community problems discussed in literature cannot be separated from the culture behind them.

Therefore, there is a need for a forum to unite the importance of preserving culture and literature as a medium for preserving local Madurese traditional values, therefore this research is very important to carry out. The hope is that through cultural preservation through performing arts based on local Madurese traditional values, it is hoped that a strong, cultural character will be formed so that it is able to form a national identity and concrete characteristics through literature based on local traditional values, especially in Madurese local traditions, as well as being a solution to the lack of community concern regarding culture.

One of the literary works that is often discussed and often performed is through theaters and performances in the form of performing arts. The performing arts that are presented almost always provide wise messages or advice, not infrequently during the performances they also discuss social and political criticism and all its problems. Researchers discuss local traditions in performing arts in Madura. This performing art presents very complex problems regarding culture, daily life, livelihoods, principles of life and ethics as well as local wisdom of the Madurese people.

There are several previous studies that discuss local Madurese traditions. The first research was research conducted by Edi Susanto regarding the Revitalization of the Noble Values of Madurese Local Traditions. He researched the stigmatization of Madurese society which has been stereotyped towards Madurese ethnicity and culture. Madurese people are often described as people who have a rough temperament, are scary, have low morals, are violent, violent and easily kill. Edi wants to straighten out this stereotype using descriptive-qualitative methods. The theoretical approach used is Post-Modern theory to look at local conditions and traditions in the current post-modern era. The results of Edi's research are that the Revitalization process is very necessary to fight the stigmatization and stereotypes carried out against the Madurese community in general. Efforts to carry out revitalization are to maintain and preserve existing noble cultural values.

The second research was research conducted by Achmad Nurholis Majid et al entitled Social Harmonization Based on Local Islamic Wisdom

in the Tanean Lanjheng Madura Community. This research focuses on cultural patterns and values. As for cultural patterns, it is explained that there are four patterns of social harmonization: the first is instrumental rationality, the second is value rationality, the third is traditional action, and affective action. The center of values and culture in Tanèan Lanjâng society is Langgar. Langgar functions as a gathering place to resolve internal problems and carry out social and religious activities. In the genealogy of Madurese society, the establishment of the tanèan lanjâng settlement has the aim of establishing a harmonious life between siblings/families and creating harmony. This also facilitates access to live and work together among individuals in the settlement. The approach method used is a qualitative method with case studies. The results of this research show that there are two reinforcing nodes in the tanean lanjheng tradition, the first is a symbol of kinship, then the second is based on religious traditions believed in by the Madurese people.

The third research is research conducted by Amirul Mukminin who examines the metaphors in Madurese regional songs which are a reflection of the local wisdom of the Madurese people which can represent the thoughts and ideas of the local community which contain noble and wise values and have been internalized from generation to generation. . Apart from being part of a reflection of culture and entertainment, the metaphors in Madurese songs tend to be used by people as a means of expressing ideas, ideas, advice and outlook on life. Therefore, this research aims to describe and explain the form, function and meaning of metaphor as a representation of the local wisdom of the Madurese people in Madurese regional songs. This research is a qualitative descriptive research. Madurese regional songs are the data source for this research, while the data is taken from phrases or clauses in the form of metaphors in Madurese regional songs. The results of this research found the form of metaphor as a representation of the local wisdom of the Madurese people in Madurese regional songs, which consists of: forms (1) sea (terrestrial), (2) wind and fire (energy), (5) plants (flora). ), (6) state (being). The function of metaphor as a representation of local Madurese wisdom consists of the functions of (1) beauty, (2) education, (3) politeness (4) timidity, and (5) romance. Meanwhile, the meaning of metaphor as a representation of the local wisdom of the Madurese people consists of (1) stylistic meaning, (2) affective meaning, (3) connotative meaning, such as motivation, ideas, enthusiasm for life, outlook on life, romance and advice.

There are 2 objectives of this research, the first is to reveal the values of local Madurese traditions and their meaning in the poetry collection Pillowku Ombak Selimutku Angin. The second objective is to find out how literary works become a medium for preserving local culture.

## 2. METHOD

Based on the explanation of the background and previous research, it is clear that local culture and local traditions are something that is very important to preserve, especially when related to the performing arts of

local communities. Performing arts can be used as a medium to preserve culture. The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method, the process of which is carried out through surveys and literature studies. The researcher visited the Sampang Regency Library and Archives office to look for credible literature and sources to use as material for further discussion and analysis regarding the role of Performing Arts in preserving Madura's local cultural values.

The several stages in grouping and classifying are as follows. First, researchers carried out in-depth reading of books and articles that were related to local Madurese cultural values. Second, after discovering the issues and connections between the role of Performing Arts and Madurese culture, researchers connected it to the local wisdom values of Madurese culture and how these forms of tradition can be preserved through Performing Arts. Third, after identifying and grouping, the researcher carried out an in-depth analysis using the theory of Semiotics and Sociology of Literature to find sociological meanings and hidden meanings that can be revealed through Madurese culture and performing arts such as Madurese songs and songs, Loddrok, Wayang and their sociological meanings for society Madurese.

The semiotic theory used in this research is Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. According to Roland Barthes, Barthes created a sign of significance analysis model into two stages, namely denotation and connotation. Denotation is the original meaning that is understood by many people, while connotation is the relationship when a sign is mixed with emotions or feelings.

Barthes divides meaning into two parts, namely connotation and denotation. In Barthes' semiology, denotation is the first level of significance system, while connotation is the second level. In this case, denotation is actually more associated with closure of meaning. As a reaction against this oppressive denotational literalism, Barthes tried to get rid of and reject it. For him there are only connotations. He further said that "literal" meaning is something natural, known as significance theory. This theory is based on the theory of signs put forward by Ferdinand de Saussure, only the meaning is expanded by means of meaning which takes place in two stages.

1. Penanda R	1 2. Petanda	Denotasi (makna primer)
Tanda I PENANDA	RII      II PETANDA	
III TANDA		Konotasi (makna sekunder)

**Bagan. Perluasan Makna**

Based on 2 levels of meaning, namely connotation and denotation, the author wants to reveal the second, deeper level of meaning related to meaning through a collection of poems related to Madurese local

wisdom values, namely poems entitled Madura, Mother, and Young Sailors.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Madurese society is a communal society. People who live together in a community that is very religious and prioritizes Islamic boarding school traditions. So, we can see that the Madurese people highly respect manners and manners towards ulama, kyai, ustadz and religious teachers, especially from Islamic boarding school circles. This is reflected in the facts explained by Kuntowijoyo (2017:342) regarding the role of the kyai who is a very honorable person and the title of kyai cannot just be given away. The title of kyai is an honorary title given to someone who has high religious knowledge and has made a contribution to society and is not a type of job.

Explanation of the role of religion and kyai is an inseparable part of Madurese society. Apart from that, the role of local Madurese culture, which is religious in nature and has strong, deep-rooted characteristics, is one of the main attractions. Like a pearl at the bottom of the deepest sea. Madurese culture has its own fans.

Meanwhile, in the discussion, the researcher only discussed 2 performing arts, namely Shadow Wayang and Loddrok which are related to the values of Madura's Local Cultural Wisdom.

#### 3.1 Local Madurese Wisdom in Loddrok Performing Arts

There is an explanation of local wisdom in Loddrok performing arts. This story tells about the local wisdom of the Madurese people from a long time ago, while sambal describes the conditions during the time of the kings and the colonial period in Madura. This can be reflected in the art of Loddrok which tells how the tradition of musical theater performances without masks is a characteristic of Madurese society, especially in the Sumenep area. There are mystical and magical values with scenes of science showing the body's immunity to sharp weapons.

From several studies that have been carried out (Peacock 1987), it is explained that the performances contained or acted out everyday scenes such as family problems, husband and wife, marriage, etc. Episodes of the war of independence and stories of heroes in Javanese and Madurese legends are also told.

Initially Loddrok was a form of folk entertainment that was staged and watched by workers (Peacock: 1967). Peacock also said that each performance shows both elements of traditional Javanese and Madurese culture as well as modern Indonesian communist nationalist themes. Each performance is also accompanied by gamelan. Most of those who watch Loddrok are not only ordinary people in urban areas but also from rural areas. The performances shown are also satirical about political and social conditions.



In loddrok performances, it is also known as ajhing (called Ajhing in Bangkalan, Pojian in Pamekasan, Slabatan in Sumenep). Ajhing is a performance that is a prayer that brings goodness or religion which is played by a group of men accompanied by saronen music which is successively performed "Baladewa dance" Ronding Dance" followed by jokes about everyday life and scenes taken from the story of a thousand One night. From the explanation above, it can be understood that the religious values of the Madurese people are still very strong, as evidenced by how performing arts are staged and presented among the community.

Loddrok Madura was inspired by elements of old Ajhing slapstick where there is word play, mimicry of body movements, and faces made up in black and white. The servants do not interrupt the main character's conversation, and most of their humorous scenes are visual: cotton in the nostrils that moves when the character moves, one shirt sleeve that is left waving unused and so on. Kings are not allowed to seduce women and go straight up on stage without dancing. On the other hand, the patih (pate) has always danced and stood up when the king entered before finally sitting down again. There is also a play afterwards in the performance. From the explanation above, it can be understood that the tales and narratives presented in loddrok performances are stories with a royal theme, remembering that during the colonial era, Madura was still in a royal system led by kings and patih, especially in the Sumenep area.

According to Kemala's loddrok group from Juruan Laok, ajhing is an old rite (salameddhan kona) held at the kramat grave. The event consists of one ghambohu danced by two male dancers dressed as women. A man wearing black glasses and squatting, carrying a bag, walks around a table filled with offerings (rasol) while continuing to talk and joke. The characters in the scene that follow are RadenAbupati (bhupate), Koeniran (comedian and pasoro papate), two dhin-raddhin (raden), two ronggeng (female dancers) and mantre tandhang (dance master). Gambhu plays an important role as the master's servant and ronggeng as his servant. The shape of the ajhing resembles a slempangan that mocks soldiers who have registered as Dutch soldiers and the Dutch themselves.

Now loddrok consists of around fifty people (musicians, theater actors, comedians, technicians and directors) none of whom are full-time and theater professionals. However, for some well-known troupes we can use the term specialization. Like the masquerade, loddrok is a typically male activity and the female roles are played by young men. The players also double as singers and dancers. They speak and sing alternately and almost always enter the stage while dancing.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that there is one local tradition that has experienced a shift in the past and its comparison with the present. In the past, the performances presented were very sacred

things and were even staged near sacred graves, but as time went by, Loddrok became a very entertaining performing art starting from the parts which were always in the same order, namely 1. Musical opening 2. Dance by two to six young men playing women or as sissies 3. One or two comedians 4. One play. From this explanation, it can be concluded that Loddrok has experienced a shift in meaning which, according to Barthes, from its connotational meaning as a performing art that has magical and sacred nuances because it presents offerings before the start of the performance then shifts to a denotational meaning, namely Loddrok as an entertaining performing art that contains local traditional values. Madura is a communal society and works together when there is a performance. This can be seen from when there is a Loddrok performance which comes to watch, not only from urban areas but also from rural areas who also enliven the event. This is proof that the Madurese people are a society that highly upholds the value of togetherness and this has been passed down from generation to generation.

### **3.1 Local Madurese Wisdom in Mask Performances**

The color of Madura's local wisdom is also reflected in the mask performance. The forms of mask performances are very diverse, both in terms of the angle and appearance, the occasions on which they are held, as well as the oral traditions that underlie them. In the procession (rak-araghan) to commemorate Molod Nabbi, Me'rad (Mi'raj) at night in the month of Ramadan and sometimes during the cow race, masks are displayed that are very different from other Madurese mask performances. The masks are often performed in pairs accompanied by a Saronen or tongtong orchestra. The dancers jump up and down, swinging, opening and closing their masks or scaring the audience. Sometimes, the ta' bhutaan procession is accompanied by other masks. The mask borrows the characteristics of certain clowns, for example the Bagong from mask theater or the characteristics of farmers. The mask is worn by young men without typical attire who walk and dance. Some masks are also worn during ritual ceremonies at the sacred grave of rokat bhuju'

Masquerade troupes are usually called to perform at wedding celebrations or rokat or hajhat, namely private ritual celebrations or to pay nadar. The troupe can consist of twenty to forty members including musicians, dancers and technical interpreters. This group does not consist of professional players but combines farmers, artisans, small traders, employees who seek additional income, especially during the dry season. Only a few well-known dhalang can be considered semi-professional.

From the explanation above, it can be understood that in everyday life the Madurese people have a high value of mutual cooperation, namely when involving local communities who need additional income



to be included in mask performance groups. There are values of mutual cooperation and feelings of shared destiny that are conveyed through mask performances.

For certain rites, namely the rokat pandhaba, the mask troupe performs a special story. This Rokot Pandhaba functions to prevent dangers that haunt a house, person or community. Rokot Pandhaba is carried out specifically for people who are considered to have bad luck because of their birth: several cases in sibling relationships are considered to bring bad luck to the brother/sister concerned and this bad luck must be removed through the appropriate ritual, namely Rokot Pandhaba. Mamaca can also be used as a means of telling myths. The mamaca event gathered four readers, two explainers, two gendhangs, a jidur, and a terbhang.

From the explanation above, it can be understood that in the mask performance tradition, the Madurese people believe that the ritual of inviting Masks to carry out the ceremony of exorcising evil has become a local value in itself for the Madurese people, namely that there is still a very strong belief system and myths that are believed to be related to bad luck, evil and evil. so on. Madurese people to this day still believe in the good rituals of Rokot Tase' which aim to bring blessings and ward off evil for fishermen when going to sea. And other rituals are still influenced by pre-Hindu or pre-Islamic culture so that this culture is still firmly rooted in the daily life of the Madurese people.

The topen performance ritual is also acculturated with Islamic traditional values such as Molod Nabbhi so that these cultural values are still maintained because they are performed to coincide with religious holidays. When related to the meaning value of a myth, according to Barthes, myth is the result of the connotation and denotation meaning of a sign, which then from the sign is passed on to the next meaning which produces a myth which is then believed by certain people in a certain area. The results of the first and second stages of meaning produce a new meaning, namely myth which is interpreted specifically for the Madurese people.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the explanation and discussion above, it can be concluded that Madurese local wisdom values are principles that are firmly held and passed down by the Madurese people from generation to generation. Local traditional values such as heroism, the struggle for life and death, wandering, kinship, a high work ethic and self-respect are things that are fought for and become principles of life for the Madurese people. This is reflected in traditional Madurese arts, namely Loddrok and Topeng.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Moh. Alif Ramdlani as the first author contributed as a contributor of ideas for discussion and analysis topics, Syekhfani Alif Akbar as the second author contributed in the form of providing books and critical theory while Syaiful Qadar Basri as the third author contributed as a mediator to connect Loddrok actors and traditions masks in Sumenep Madura.

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