

The Analysis of Performance Structure of *Jheren Kencak* Probolinggo Traditional Art

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on the performance structure of Jheren Kencak traditional art that developed in Probolinggo Regency. This study aimed at describing the structure of the traditional Jheren Kencak performing arts that developed in Probolinggo Regency. The method used in this research was descriptive qualitative method. Data collection techniques were carried out by using interview, observation, and literature study. Based on the analysis, it was found that the Jheren Kencak traditional art which developed in Probolinggo Regency has its own performance structure consisting of the following elements: (1) giro ketipungan, (2) jheren kember, (3) jheren tonggel, (4) tapel-napel (5) lawakan, (6) rak-arakan, and (7) mang temang.

Keywords: *Structure, Traditional art, Jheren Kencak.*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an artistic nation with a thriving traditional art. Based on official news released by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia that in 2022, there are more than five hundred varieties of traditional arts spread across all provinces in Indonesia (Kemendikbud RI). However, the large variety of Indonesian traditional arts has not captured much attention of the Indonesian, especially from academics (Siburian et al.; Tjahyadi, Andayani, and Hosnol Wafa; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Mohammad Zamroni; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Moh. Zamroni). This shows that research on Indonesian traditional art is still relevant to be conducted.

This research focused on the performance structure of *Jheren Kencak* traditional art that developed in Probolinggo Regency. Two factors led to the decision of this study's focus. First, the locals of Probolinggo Regency. At the anthropological level, their existence themselves can be understood as a unique culture due to their hybrid character.

Probolinggo Regency is one of the regencies in East Java Province. This regency has an area of approximately 169,616.65 Ha or +1,696.17 km² or 1.07% of the land and sea area of East

Java Province. Geographically, it has some boundaries which include: (1) to the north: the Madura Strait, (2) to the east: Situbondo Regency and Jember Regency, (3) to the west: Pasuruan Regency, (4) to the south: Lumajang Regency and Malang Regency, and (5) to the north of the central part there is the autonomous region called Probolinggo City. At the level of government administration, Probolinggo Regency consists of 24 sub-districts, 325 villages and 5 sub-districts, with 1,642 community units and 5,864 neighborhood units (Probolinggo district government).

The locals of Probolinggo Regency are a unique society. This uniqueness can be seen in the hybrid character of each of them. Their cultural hybridity is caused by the mixing of elements from Javanese culture with Madurese culture. The elements from the two cultures were assimilated, resulting in a new cultural form known as the *Pendalungan* culture (Zoebazary; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Moh. Zamroni; Tjahyadi, Andayani, and Hosnol Wafa; Prakrisno Satrio et al.; Sudikan)

According to cultural science, a type of culture known as *Pendalungan* experiences absorption followed by the establishment of a new culture. The elements of the original culture are still discernible in the *Pendalungan* culture, but they have undergone mutation and

alteration to become a new culture (M. Ilham Zoebazary; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Mohammad Zamroni; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Moh. Zamroni; Tjahyadi, Andayani, and Hosnol Wafa; Sudikan; Prakrisno Satrio et al.). As a result, the *Pendalungan* culture is unique.

The culture that evolved in Probolinggo reflects the *Pendalungan* culture itself. Although they have undergone transition and adaptation, the features of Javanese or Madurese culture may still be seen in these societies. As a result, it is impossible to categorically attribute the culture of the locals of Probolinggo Regency to either Javanese or Madurese culture. Although having recognizable components of Javanese and Madurese culture, this inability turn them into an independent and unique culture (Tjahyadi, Andayani, and Hosnol Wafa; Sudikan; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Mohammad Zamroni; Tjahyadi, Wafa, and Moh. Zamroni; Zoebazary). As a result, Probolinggo Regency's locals have a unique culture. Therefore, conducting a research on traditional art, which is an integral part of the culture of Probolinggo's local communities, is relevant to do.

The second factor that prompted the choice of Jheren Kencak's structure performance as the focus of this research

was due to the lack of research on it. Based on the analysis, only three previous studies were found and they were conducted in the last five years. First, the previous research, in the type of thesis, entitled "*Development of the Performing Arts of the Jaran Kencak Sinar Remaja Association of Probolinggo Regency in 2002-2020 (Study of Form and Function)*" written by Fitriya (2020). This research focused on historical aspects of Jaran Kencak's development which were carried out by the traditional arts group Paguyuban Sinar Remaja, Probolinggo Regency. The previous study therefore revealed the discrepancy with the present study. This study examines Jheren Kencak traditional art performance's structure rather than its historical development.

Moreover, the difference between this research and the thesis entitled "*Development of the Performing Arts Jaran Kencak Sinar Remaja Association of Probolinggo Regency 2002-2020 (Study of Form and Function)*" written by Fitriya (2020) lies in the research subject. Fitriya's research took Jaran Kencak artists, who are members of the Sinar Remaja Association group, as the research subjects. Meanwhile, this study chose the performers of the Jheren Kencak art "*Cinta Budaya*" as the research subjects. It shows that there are differences between the current and previous study.

However, the research written by Fitriya (2020) is still used as a reference and a source of bibliographical data since it has the historical data of Jheren Kencak Probolinggo traditional art. Thus, Fitriya (2020) study is still necessary and extremely beneficial for this current study.

The second study, "The Function of Presenting Jaran Kencak Art to the Community in Probolinggo Regency" published by Fitriya (2021), is another previous study that used as a reference for this study. The earlier study focused on the functional aspect of Jaran Kencak traditional art presentation. It contrasts with the current study, which focuses on the investigation of the structure performance found in Jheren Kencak Probolinggo. The second difference between Fitriya's research and this research lies in the research location. Fitriya's study was conducted in the research location was in Pedagangan Village, Tiris District, Probolinggo Regency. Meanwhile, the location of this research is in Sumberdawe Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency. Thus, it shows the differences between these two studies.

Even though it shows the difference between the current and previous study, Fitriya's study is still used as library data regarding the structure of

Jheren Kencak Probolinggo traditional art performance. Therefore, the research entitled "*The Function of Presenting Jaran Kencak Art to the Community in Probolinggo Regency*" written by Fitriya (2021) is still necessary and extremely beneficial for this current study.

The third study used as a reference for previous study is a scientific article entitled "*Law Enforcement of Article 69 of Law Number 13 of 2003 concerning Employment Related to Working Requirements for Children (Study on Jaran Kencak Art Dancers in Probolinggo Regency)*" written by Septiyowati and Rusdiana (2021). That study focused on the legal aspects contained in the traditional performing arts Jheren Kencak in Probolinggo which is different from the current study. This current study does not focus on the legal aspects of the Jheren Kencak Probolinggo traditional art, but on the analysis of structure performance. Nonetheless, study conducted by Septiyowati and Rusdiana (2021) became a reference in this study since it contained information about the attitude of Probolinggo Regency Government towards the Jheren Kencak art. Therefore, the research entitled "*Law Enforcement of Article 69 of Law Number 13 of 2003 Concerning Employment Related to Working Requirements for Children (Study*

on *Jaran Kencak Art Dancers in Probolinggo Regency*)" written by Septiyowati and Rusdiana (2021) was used as a data source literature in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study was a qualitative-descriptive method. Definitively, the qualitative-descriptive is a research method that utilizes qualitative data and is described descriptively (Denzin et al.; Rohidi; Tjahyadi, Andayani, and Hosnol Wafa, Introduction to Cultural Theory and Research Methods). The primary data used in this study came from interviews with three informants, namely (1) Cak Mojer, the leader of the Jheren Kencak traditional arts group "*Cinta Budaya*" in Sumberdawe Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency; (2) Cak Tosan, a member of the Jaran Kencak traditional art group "*Cinta Budaya*" in Sumberdawe Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency; and (3) Ahmad Bahrul Ulum, an artist and local member of Sumberdawe Village, Maron District, Probolinggo Regency. The secondary data in this research was the collection of field observation data and literature study. In this study, the data analysis was carried out by utilizing descriptive-interpretative

techniques to describe opinions or views that exist in the research object (Denzin et al.; Tjahyadi, Andayani, and Hosnol Wafa, Introduction to Theory and Research Methods Culture). The results of data analysis in this study were presented by using informal techniques since they were presented in ordinary words.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 The History of Jheren Kencak

Probolinggo

Jheren Kencak is a traditional performing art that developed in Pasuruan, Probolinggo, Jember, Banyuwangi, Bondowoso and Tengger regions. According to Cak Mojer (interview, 12 February 2022) the terms '*Jheren Kencak*' were driven from two Madurese words '*jheren*' and '*kencak*'. In Indonesian, the word '*jheren*' means horse and the word '*kencak*', in Indonesian, means dancing. Thus, lexically the word '*Jheren Kencak*', in means a dancing horse.

According to Cak Mojer (interview, 12 February 2022) Jheren Kencak's traditional performing arts have developed since the 1960s. The pioneer figure in Probolinggo was Mr. Surojo. At the beginning, this performing art was done only for sacred event because there was a certain ritual procession. However, since 1995, there has been a development in the traditional Jheren Kencak performing arts.

The low enthusiasm of the locals forced the Jheren Kencak art groups to make modifications by adding an entertainment aspect called '*lawakan*' (comedy) element. The addition of entertainment aspect to the traditional performing arts of Jheren Kencak has brought it back to the local's interest. Therefore, since 1995, the element of comedy in structure performance of Jheren Kencak has been maintained to this day (Cak Mojer, interview, 12 February 2022).

3.2 Performance Structure of Jheren Kencak Probolinggo

According to Cak Mojer (interview on 12 February 2022) as a performing art, Jaran Kencak Probolinggo has particular elements that compose it. These elements become inseparable parts of the traditional performing arts of Jaran Kencak Probolinggo. The following description presents each of the element:

a. *Giro Ketipungan*

Giro ketipungan is an element of exposition in the performance structure of Jheren Kencak Probolinggo. This element is known as the beginning procession of Jaran Kencak art performance. In this element, the audiences are presented with an introductory narrative regarding the contents and objectives of the event. The narrative is presented in the form of Madurese singing accompanied by the

typical wasp music of the locals played by Jheren Kencak *ketipung* musicians. The *Giro Ketipungan* functions as musical accompaniment during the procession of the bride and groom to the destined house of the wedding ceremony (Cak Mojer, interview, 12 February 2022;).



Figure 1. The *Giro Ketipungan* Musicians (Source: Private Doc)

b. *Jheren Kember*

Jheren Kember is the second element contained in the performance structure of Jheren Kencak. This element is part of Jheren Kencak Probolinggo which presents the attraction of two horses that have previously been made up in clothes of colorful patterned cloth and decorated with tassels and accented with several accessories. It is as shown in the image below:



Figure 2. *Jheren kember* (Source: Private Doc)

In this part, the horse attraction is presented when the horse is dancing with the handler and wasp accompaniment only, without any awe or *gending* lyrics. This part is usually done at the beginning of Jaran Kencak art performance after the giro ketipungan has been played. The handler of the twin horses is usually done by members of the community, not the main handler or the leader of the Jaran Kencak art (Cak Mojer, interview, 12 February 2022).

c. *Jheren Tonggel*

The next part is *Jheren Tonggel*. *Jheren Tonggel* is a horse attraction with a *Janis* who dances to the accompaniment of typical Probolinggo-style *gending* and also the *jhung kejhungan* sung by *Janis* (the main handler in Jaran Kencak Probolinggo show). According to Cak Mojer (interview 12 February 2022), this part differs from the previous part in *Jheren Kember* performance. *Jheren Kember* is done to enliven the flow of the performance structure as well as for entertainment, while *Jheren Tonggel* is the sacred part. This is because in *Jheren Tonggel* there is a *ruwat* ceremony which functions as a " *ngersakno niat* " ritual or asking permission from the owner to start the ruwatan event.



Figure 3. *Jheren tonggel* with a *Janis* (The main handler of Jaran Kencak)
(Source: Private Doc)

d. *Tapel-Napel*

In *Jheren Kencak* performing arts, *Tapel-Napel* is the climax part of the performance structure. This section has *saweran* activities or giving money from the invited audience. The *saweran* activity is given to the owner of the event or the bride and groom. It is also accompanied by the singing of a rhyme type called *jhung-kejhungan*. In Indonesian, *jhung-kejhungan* is an art of reciting rhyme-type texts (Muhri). In the *Tapel-Napel* section, the *saweran* can be given to the bride or dancers by attaching money to their bodies. There are several ways to give it, whether giving it directly or providing a tray and the money will later be taken by the *remo* dancers (Cak Mojer, interview, 12 February 2022).



Figure 5. *Lawakan* (comedy) section in *Jheren Kencak*
(Source: Private Doc)

e. *Rak-Arakan*

Rak-Arakan is parading activity of the bride and groom by horse to the local relatives and community leaders' houses. During the trip, this procession is accompanied by wasps and followed by the relatives' children or the neighbors' sons to enliven the event. This procession also serves as proof and social image to the public that the owner is capable of accomplishing *ruwatan* ceremony. Besides, it is also an event for gathering and asking for the relatives' blessing so that only good prayers and wishes continue to flow to someone who is being treated as well the owner.



Figure 6. *Rak-Arakan* Preparation in *Jheren Kencak* performance
(Source: Private Doc)

f. *Mang Temangan*

Temangan Malam is usually carried out after the procession of the bride and groom who have returned from the community leaders' houses such as the village head and the close relatives. This event is used as a closing of a series of *Jheren Kencak* art performances. That is what Cak Mojer stated (interview, 12 February 2022) as follows:

“Mang temangan biasana e laksana agi salastarena prosesi arak-arakan komantan se pon pleman deri romanah kepala desa kalaben tan taretannna sohibul hajet. Acara panika kangguy panotopan serangkaian pertunjukan jheren kencak. E dhelem mang temangan paneka jheren se ampon pleman ngarak deteng akompol ka terob ben anggota salanjutteh a karjeh sareng ri tarian ben e yerengin jhung kejhungan gending la' juli. Neng begien ka' dinto jugen bedhe sompingan otabeh tapelan dhe' ka pa ngejhung ben komantan. Mang temangan jugen jhugen kangguy simbolisasi pamitan ben pangesaan niat sohibul hajet ampon sah ben terlaksana, sa engge arepanna potra otabeh potre se e selameten panika ampon e jheu agi deri bele' otabeh bleih”

In *Temangan Malam*, the horses returning from parading gather at the venue with members of *Jheren Kencak* arts community to hold a party accompanied by dances and *kejungan*. It is also a symbol of farewell from the *Jheren Kencak* community and a symbol of validating the intentions of

those who have an event. They hope that their sons and daughters will be kept away from calamities, epidemics, or bad luck.



Figure 7. Procession of *Mang Temang*
(Source: Private Doc)

CONCLUSION

Jheren Kencak is a traditional art that is not only developing in Lumajang, but also in Probolinggo Regency. This art is influenced by Madurese culture which can be seen from its name. *Jheren Kencak* art in Indonesian means "dancing horse". As a performing art, this traditional art has a distinctive performance structure which consists of several elements, namely: (1) *Giro Ketipungan* (element of exposition), (2) *Jheren Kember* (element of raising action), (3) *Jheren Tonggel* (element of raising action), (4) *Tapel-Napel* (climax elements), (5) *Lawakan* (falling action elements), (6) *Rak-Arakan* (falling action elements), and (7) *Mang Temang* (denouement elements).

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