

Revitalization of Oral Literature of *Maca Babad Pasir Luhur* in Banyumas Regency

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Abstract

One of oral literatures from Banyumas, namely Maca Babad Pasir Luhur (Reading Pasir Luhur Chronicle) tradition in Grumbul Cibun, Sunyalangu Village, Karanglewas District, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, has been abandoned by its successors for the last three years. This is caused by environmental conditions that tend not to care and by technological advance in the village. Babad Pasir Luhur is the oldest Banyumas chronicle which talks about the pioneer who founded Banyumas Duchy (now Banyumas Regency). The chronicle was written in the form of a ballad in a mixed language consisting of Old Javanese, Sundanese, and Mataraman Javanese. The chronicle sung with Macapat style begins to disappear in various areas in Banyumas. Based on this condition, it is necessary to take steps to revitalize and maintain Maca Babad Pasir Luhur culture. The formulation of the problem consists of two questions, namely how the process of revitalizing the oral literature Maca Babad Pasir Luhur is and how the development of the oral literature Maca Babad Pasir Luhur is. The researchers use direct observation method and interview with informants in the village. After collecting data and revitalizing oral literatures that is appropriate to overcome these problems, they describe and analyze the problems. For this reason, process and meaning are highlighted in this research. The research model used is exploratory, namely understanding the phenomenon in general without ignoring the possibility of choosing a certain focus in particular. The results of this study are the description of the revitalization and the development of oral literature Maca Babad Pasir Luhur in Banyumas Regency.

Keywords: revitalization, oral literature, maca babad pasir luhur

1. Introduction

One of the intellectual properties that Indonesian people have and that reflects the culture of the archipelago is folklore. Folklore is a form of local cultural wealth (Dananjaya, 2007). Folklore is part of culture. Folklore and oral literature - whatever their forms and shapes, are created by humans. Oral literature is inherited orally or half-orally (partly orally) from generation to generation. For this reason, it is necessary to priorly study culture in general, in the hope of the confusion in understanding culture in general can be minimized and can be eliminated (Sholihin, 2021). Each region in Indonesia has different folklores. Each has its own characteristics. This is because Indonesia is a country consisting of various ethnic groups of different tribes. Each ethnic group and each tribe group have different cultures. Babad is one of the written folk tales. It can be said that written traditions contain history and literary work, as found in chronicles, mysticism, lontarak, saga, songs and so on. One area that has a written tradition in the form of chronicles is Banyumas area, Central Java. Banyumas has written folklore in Maca Babad Pasir Luhur, which talks about the legend and ancestral origins of Banyumas people. Babad Pasir Luhur is

a cultural identity for Banyumas people that emerges from the past which was shared hundreds of years ago as a unit of historical awareness (Abdullah 1985: 14). In addition, the very popular text of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur talks about the youth of one of the Banyumas ancestors who comes from Pajajaran (Knebel, 1900). However, as the time goes, this oral literature begins to be abandoned by the people. This is influenced by the progress of science and technology in the Banyumas area. According to the Expertise and Professional Services Group (Kelompok Keahlian dan Layanan Profesional or KKLP) for the Protection and Modernization of Language and Literature, the Language Center of Central Java Province, Maca Babad Pasir Luhur is on the verge of extinction. This inventory is to find out the vitality of the oral literature of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur whose maestro has passed away. Based on the background of this problem, the researchers try to conduct a study related to efforts to revitalize oral literature from Babad Banyumas so that it can be maintainable and sustainable in the future. There are several reasons why oral literature must be revitalized immediately; firstly, Maca Babad Pasir Luhur tradition is now threatened with extinction. Currently, people rarely make oral traditions as part of interpersonal communication. Oral literature only exists in religious rituals and cultural celebrations, unlike in the past which was done in daily communication and used as part of the development of character that was carried out by ancient parents for their children or grandchildren. Secondly, the lack of creative media in the delivery of oral literature (storytelling) of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur so that only a few people understand it. Then thirdly, the rapid advancement of science and technology has changed the mindset of society to become more modern. And the last, there is an urgency for the fading of archipelago culture, especially in Banyumas Regency which is increasingly being abandoned, so it must be revitalized immediately with an effective, efficient and up-to-date method.

Previous studies have been carried out by several researchers. Ryolita (2018) examined variations of Kamandaka legend based on the transmission of supporting communities. Meina (2018) conducted a study about learning resources for fairy tales with Banyumasan Cultural Conservation, while Eko Maharudin and Akhmad Fauzan (2022) discussed the leadership style of the characters in Babad Pasir Luhur: the reflections on leadership patterns in 21st-century Banyumas society. Mutiarani Shaleha (2022) illustrated the origins of the Banyumas name as an effort to introduce history to children. Then, Widya Putri Ryolita (2023) conducted a study entitled "Preservation of Oral Folklore of Kamandaka in Banyumas via YouTube. The five studies have something in common, namely describing the origins of the history of oral literature and the immanent meaning from the historical perspective of the Banyumasan chronicle. However, there are also differences in the discussion of the contents.

Ryolita (2018) conducted a study about oral literature that aims to raise local potential (local wisdom) by examining three variations of Kamandaka legend story. The three variations are the first version from Sri Yulianingsih, the Keymaster of the Carangandul ruins, the version from Budi Sasongko (descendant of the Pasirluhur kingdom), and Carlan (manager of the ancient site of the Banyumas Tourism and Culture Office). These three variations result in different storytelling focuses, especially on how to convey ideas to listeners. Sri Yulianingsih's version talks about Kamandaka's life to Patih Carangandul for the purpose of gathering social capital for Sri Yulianingsih. Budi Sasongko's version talks more about Kamandaka's life to his descendants for the purpose of symbolic capital for himself. And the last, Carlan's version talks more about ancient sites for historical tourism potential related to places in the Kamandaka story and serves as a means of enhancing his career. Meina (2018) discussed the types of Banyumasan fables and their potential as a source of learning as a preservation of Banyumasan culture through education. This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design. This research is believed to provide theoretical benefits regarding the concept of learning art and literature. The results show that Banyumas has various folklore with Banyumasan values. Fairy tales containing the preservation of Banyumasan culture have the potential to become a source of learning (enrichment) processed through education for children.

Eko Maharudin and Akhmad Fauzan (2022) described leadership styles in the attitudes and character of the characters from the story of Babad Pasir Luhur which are still reflected in the current pattern of leadership in the Banyumas community, namely (1) transformational, (2) charismatic, and (3) autocratic, and (4) transactional. However, there are also leadership traits that begin to fade in the Banyumas community, such as (1) being less cooperative and (2) exclusive.

Mutiarani Shaleha (2022) discussed reading interest that could be started by reading folklore books around the environment. In Banyumas Regency, folklore books, especially folklore from the origins of the name Banyumas, are not friendly for children so that it is necessary to design a child-friendly folklore book by adding illustrations in it. The purpose of this design is to find out how to design illustrations according to the story of the origin of the name Banyumas which can leave a strong impression so that children can easily remember, and to find out how to apply the illustration of the origin of the name Banyumas through the medium of story books that can provide fun experiences for children.

Widya Putri Ryolita (2023) described the efforts to preserve Kamandaka legend in Banyumas through social media, namely YouTube. This research belongs to folklore research by raising the local wisdom of Banyumas culture. By taking advantage of the popular YouTube, information related to the legend of

"Kamandaka" in Banyumas can be accessed easily, cheaply and quickly by all levels of society. The use of social media, especially YouTube, is not only as an entertainment medium but also as a forum for content creator's creativity by looking at current development and following audience's interests for the benefit of religious symbols and personal benefits in terms of income. The purpose of this study is to determine the revitalization that occurs in the art of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur in Banyumas Regency and the changes in function experienced by its oral literature.

2. Research Methods

The study used ethnographic research method with direct technique and interview with informants. Spradley stated that interviews in the ethnographic method are conversational events so that informants are more open so that they get as much real data as possible. The two methods used were data collection methods and data analysis methods. The data collection method was used to collect data in the form of material objects in the form of the art tradition of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur, while the formal object was Ruth Finnegan's theory of oral literature. The data collection method was carried out in two ways. The first was by using literature and the second was by collecting field data using ethnographic method. Data collection method was used to collect data directly in the field, to make observation, to interview informants and sources, and to watch performances firsthand in order to see the changes occurred in society. The literature study method was used to process data obtained from the field and support the data analysis carried out. This study also used a formal object in the form of Ruth Finnegan's theory related to three aspects that are special characteristics of oral literature as well as the function of oral literature.

3. Results and Discussion

The result shows that there are several steps to make changes in the oral literature of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur in Banyumas Regency. First, revitalizing elements that contain local wisdom values must appear frequently in Maca Babad Pasir Luhur by using creative language. Second, revitalizing it by changing the function in the more creative Maca Babad Pasir Luhur by compiling oral literature in narrative and dialogue aspects, accompanied by instruments and song lyrics, storytelling costumes, make-up, dance move, and stage setting. Third, revitalizing Maca Babad Pasir Luhur must be staged or broadcast through creative and innovative digital-based media such as Youtube and other social media, such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, etc.

Text in oral literature is the most important element, although it is different from written literature because oral literature has verbal texts. One piece of text will have no meaning if it is not actualized. The statement above explains that the text is indeed the most important element of oral literature, but the text will have no meaning without performance. Written literature, too, is meaningless if it has not been interpreted by the reader. Therefore, through the appreciation of the audience and readers, literature can be interpreted and even felt its function. Hutomo reasserts the difference between written literature and oral literature. Written poetry, after being created, can be stored and distributed and even read repeatedly, while oral poetry is created simultaneously during performance. This gives the conclusion that in every performance of oral literature, whether played by the same person with the same story, or different performers with the same story, with different condition, and with different audience, it will bring out different meanings and provide different functions. The condition above can occur because in oral literature the singers or the players have a kind of story pattern known as a formula. A formula is defined as a set of words that are regularly used under the same metrical conditions to express a given important idea.

Discussing oral literature is not only discussing cultural heritage of ancestors who are known to be non-literate but also discussing cultural property that contains various valuable assets of a society. For this reason, Maca Babad Pasir Luhur can be said to be one of the local wisdoms. Local wisdom is full of religious values. In terms of its origins, local wisdom culture is a process of creating human feelings that is centered on an honest, sincere, trustworthy and intelligent conscience that emits in the human mind, and is carried out by actions and deeds.

The emergence of change in several parts of the arts or assumed to be a change that occurs is due to following technological developments. The development of technology and industry inevitably has an impact on developments or changes in mindsets and perspectives on all things, including the arts. The emergence of various forms of oral literature, even several variations that are said to deviate from their normal form, is a common thing that occurs in society. Even these changes can create new forms that are much different from the previous forms. However, the changes made are not necessarily intentional as a composition of oral literature, but an effort to preserve and maintain society for the existence of such oral literature.

In the modern era that demands the involvement of technology in every line of life, it is not strange for tradition to follow the flow. Oral tradition includes oral literature that changes and turns into script. This is done for the sake of the continuity and preservation of oral literature. Many traditions including oral literature are studied, analyzed, written in various print media and other written works. Oral literature in its journey will certainly encounter many challenges to survive, as Suwardi's opinion as one of the causes of changes in oral literature. Of the various types and varieties of oral literature, phenomena will emerge in it. Oral literature may fade, mingle, almost become extinct, even become extinct and disappear. Oral literature that will continue to survive according to Amir must have room for improvisation, an openness to adjust to the progress that is taking place in society. Not only in terms of dialogue but also in terms of story content, more broadly, openness in oral literature can be done with adjustments to other aspects such as costumes, musical instruments, song lyrics that are the accompaniment.

R. Finnegan states in an oral literature journal he wrote that a tradition must be carried on or carried out by the community to maintain its sustainability. Finnegan is one of the figures in the field of oral literature. He does not directly mention the term revitalization. From the statement given, it appears that the concept of revitalization in oral literature is supported by him. Adjustments, changes, or modifications, even large-scale overhauls can be carried out by adjusting the conditions that exist in society. However, it should be noted that the modifications made still pay attention to the essence or characteristics of the oral literature. The changes made do not change the core, characteristics, and hereditary values contained in oral literature which are characteristic of the collective society.

3.1 Revitalization in Maca Babad Pasir Luhur

The art of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur has several inherent aspects, not only in the form of text (oral literature), but also in several other supporting aspects which form a single unit so that it is called *srandul*. Therefore, the process of revitalization is not applied merely to the dialogue (oral literature). Supporting aspects in Maca Babad Pasir Luhur are also the target of modifications to make them more in line with the age. There are three characteristics of a poem (literary work) referred to as oral literature, namely (1) composition, (2) way of inheritance, and (3) performance.

1. The composition or creation of oral literature is by oral language. Despite in its development, a lot of oral literature is created by the assistance of writing. This is in line with the Banyumas Ngapak Community. Pak Sutejo as the head of the community acknowledges that the script to be performed has been prepared in advance. This is because the performance of oral literature Maca Babad Pasir Luhur carries socio-political criticism and is staged in general, so it is necessary to collect data, facts and caution. Although it is undeniable that when on stage there is improvisation by the actors. Ong states that this includes in secondary orality, namely orality assisted with writing. Although what should be spoken is made in written form, it does not abolish what is spoken. Both still live together and support each other. This community also utilizes social media to support promotions such as Facebook and YouTube.
2. Inheritance is one of the basic things that differentiates written literature and oral literature. Oral literature is inherited orally. This criterion is thing that is emphasized by folklore on the requirement to be called oral literature and is a striking difference from written literature. In the Suketeki Community, inheritance is done in writing and orally. When they are about to perform, the actors are given an overview of the story in general with the help of a script.
3. Performances of oral literature have formulas and themes that are held by the actors in their performances. The play is given complete freedom to improvise the story with a note that it does not change the core of the story or an important story.

3.2 Changes in Functions in Maca Babad Pasir Luhur

As stated by the informant, *srandul* is an art that has existed since Walisongo era. The length of time it has spread and maintained in the community has certainly experienced various ups and downs as well as changes in function that are felt in the surrounding community. R. Finnegan (1991) states that often oral literature presents a broad (more ambiguous) meaning and that is intentionally presented. Sometimes, but often, impliedly, it becomes the source of misunderstanding between players and listeners. Hutomo (1991) states that in general oral literature in society has a function as a projection system, cultural validation, a tool for enforcing social norms and as a tool for social control, and a tool for children's education. In addition, Amir (2013) also argues that the main and first function of oral literature is for entertainment. The second function is to store rich poetic vocabulary. Then the third function is as a means of education, for the socialization of values. Next, the fourth function is as a place for nostalgia. The fifth function is as a means of gathering people to raise funds, and now the sixth function appears, namely gathering people to listen to political messages, political introductions, and program socialization. Furthermore, oral literature also has broad functions to oppose political authority, satire, propaganda, show off,

ritual traditions, expressions of love, complaints, overflows of hidden emotions that cannot be said, deceive, mediate human souls, entertain foreign tourists, make a living, parody, raise a scandal, entertain, and more.

Furthermore, R. Finnegan (1979) says that determining the function of oral literature must pay attention to local culture. Some of them are local (community) views, for example beliefs, religion, experience, as well as special symbols and symbols used. Currently, oral literature is able to function as a media for protest, conveying aspirations to leaders in a subtle way. As in the past, art has always succeeded in becoming a vehicle for conveying people's aspirations and requests to their leaders. In this case, oral literature functions as a medium for people's aspirations. Through oral literature, protests against government policies that are socio-political in nature or in any case can be conveyed and packaged nicely. Apart from that, the function of this oral literature is also more of a subtle and easy-to-reach protest.

The explanation of these conditions is the condition behind the need to carry out revitalization for Maca Babad Pasir Luhur. This has directly impacted on the occurrence of several changes, including aspects of performances that are inherent along with functions that impact the surrounding community. Therefore, out of the texts containing in oral literature, it is necessary to describe and analyze aspects that also support oral literature when it is performed which are undergoing revitalization. These aspects include: accompaniment instruments, music, costumes (clothing), make-up, dance move, and stage setting.

4. Conclusion

The revitalization carried out makes changes to the arts and culture of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur with a new atmosphere that attracts the public's attention through creative and innovative media (Youtube and other social media). This is one of the efforts to preserve, maintain, and even develop oral literature in the midst of increasingly sophisticated technological developments. In addition, revitalization is carried out not only in text (oral literature) but also in other aspects of performances, including: accompaniment instruments, music, costumes (clothing), make-up, dance move, and stage setting. Of all the revitalization aspects, the most visible revitalization or change/development is in the aspect of story/dialogue narrative which is oral literature. The text of the story is inserted by social criticism and conveying aspirations to leaders. The occurrence of revitalization in Maca Babad Pasir Luhur automatically causes a change in function which is also inherent in the art and oral literature of Maca Babad Pasir Luhur. Maca Babad Pasir Luhur, which previously functions more as a media for preaching used by saints, is now a means of entertainment for residents, and has even become one of the media in conveying their aspirations to the government. Through revitalization it is proven that srandul oral literature is able to survive and attract the interest and curiosity of the public to watch, even some parties positively welcome and support.

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