



Javanese Asceticism in Serat Kalatidha

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Abstract

This article focuses on discussing Javanese asceticism in *Serat Kalatidha*. The purpose of this study is to identify the concept of Javanese culture in *Serat Kalatidha*. The data were extracted through the text analysis techniques of *Serat Kalatidha*. Text analysis is conducted with a structural analysis approach that focuses on the concept of Javanese asceticism. The results of the study show that *Serat Kalatidha* by Ranggawarsita contains the values of Javanese philosophy which is the basic foundation in Ranggawarsita's thinking. *Serat Kalatidha* teaches philosophy on how to deal with developing conditions. There are some wise attitudes shown in *Serat Kalatidha* described by the poets which are considered as a very useful advices when dealing with a particular situation or challenge of life.

Keywords: Asceticism; Javanese; *Serat Kalatidha*

Introduction

Harmony between man and nature is one of the characteristics of Javanese culture that has been recognized and acknowledged by the world community. *Niels Mulder* and *Hilderd Geertz*, in their works, gave such a high appreciation to the lifestyle and spiritual behavior of Javanese society. *Franz Magnis Suseno* was struck by the pattern of Javanese life philosophy. *Franz* conveyed that the harmony of Javanese life is a thing that has been spirited and become an integral part of the harmony of Javanese society life. The Javanese are essentially seeking harmony, while the highest value in Javanese life is the harmony where its community is in a harmonious and peaceful state, because each person has a different place and position and each person has to pay attention to another, so it is impossible to have a conflict arises, but if it so, this corresponds to the concept of asceticism put forward to maintain harmony between the micro cosmos and the macrocosm (Suseno, 1986: 409). This Javanese culture is not only displays aesthetic values, but this culture prioritizes the values of tolerance and balance in everyday life. Moreover, Javanese culture tends to lift the values of simplicity and modesty.

Humanism in Javanese culture has a history and cultural roots that originate from the ideal image of civilization mentioned above. In the writings of the old poets describe the traditions and noble values that are the source of the Javanese life. One of Javanese literary works that contains the philosophy of life is *Serat Kalatidha* by R.Ng Ranggawarsita (1802-1875). *Serat Kalatidha* was created by the poet because of his restlessness about the social changes of the nineteenth century which resulted from the intervention

of political and economic policy of Dutch colonialism. He, then, called for a change of aristocratic behavior to face of Dutch colonial intervention. This led to the ethical and political erosion of the court. This wise thought is able to dampen all kinds of turmoil inside and out, so that it will rise the tranquility in life. Then how are we, the Javanese nowadays, in challenging the a wave of times which seem to threaten the preservation of our culture /culture?

Research Methods

This research uses qualitative method by using structural approach. The structural approach serves to reconstruct the changes due to the presence of Dutch colonialism. The research data is in the form of *Serat Kalatidha* manuscript. Technique of collecting data is done by using literature study. Data analysis technique in this research is content analysis technique.

Discussion

A. Manuscript Serat Kalatidha

The word *Kalatidha* is derived from Sanskrit which is a combination of two words of *kala* and *tidha*. *Kala* means time, state, or also means of the times, while *tidha* means doubt. So, the word *Kalatidha* means the age of doubt. Kamadjaja (1964: 51) says that the word *tida* means defective or lacking. Thus according to Kamadjaja, *Kalatidha* means the age of doubt or the time of disability. *Serat Kalatidha* is written in *macapat* form, it is one of the new traditional Javanese poetry genre whose bait content is considering the *guru gatra* (rule of number of lines) in each of the verses according to the pattern of the *tembang* or bait or *metrum* used, the *guru wilangan* (the rule of number in each line) taking into account the position of the line on the pattern of the verse and the *guru lagu* (the vowel rule in the last line) by taking into account the position of the line on the *tembang sinom* verse pattern which is 12 verses. *Serat Kalatidha* is called *serat piwulung*. *Serat piwulung* is a literary work in which it contains moral teachings and attitude of life. The main purpose of the noble *piwulung* Java reflected in these verbal symbols (languages) is basically centered and heads the concept of *kautamaning urip* (goodness of life).

Serat Kalatidha is a divination from Ranggawarsita who provides an illustration of the chaotic state in the future. He, then, calls it *zaman edan* or crazy era. So when the poet gave crazy era conception, it has not occurred yet, because it is how the picture of a future life. Meanwhile, according to Kamadjaja (1964: 113), he states that *Kalatidha* is not a divination. The reason is that within the *Serat Kalatidha*, there is no year number stated, either openly or in disputes. Just like how Ranggawarsita writes the divination or *jangka*. Kamadjaja tends to argue that *Kalatidha* is a philosophy about the perfection of human nature against the Lord (Kamadjaja, 1964: 115).

Kamadjaja opinion is reinforced by the opinion of Muh. Yamin, who said that *Kalatidha* was created by Ranggawarsita to insinuate the state of society at that time, in the hope of improvements in the future. This satirical attitude is one form or personality form of the Javanese who try to assess the actions, attitudes, or behavior of a person or society that is generally negative. This fact implies optimism that literature stores the values of life that can affect the life of a nation. At least according to Mohamad, G (1996: 37) poetry is a form of sarcasm expression. It reflects the sensitivity of its poet. Indeed, writers and other artists are the most sensitive members of society.

B. Concept of Javanese Asceticism in Serat Kalatidha

Asceticism is derived from the Greek that is *ascetic* which is interpreted as a spiritual exercise that controls the soul (Carl Olson, 2011: 194). Askesis is defined as self-training to increase the spiritual values. Asceticism is generally defined as the systematic self-denial of the ideal desires and it can be viewed as religious doctrines in which one can attain a higher spiritual state and self-discipline and self-denial. In other words, asceticism is understood as the attainment of self-perfection in the sense of holding the soul, worship, maintaining the words of the forbidden lust etc (Schaefer, 2007: 175).

Asceticism in the view of Islam, according to Ibn Khaldun (tt: 541), is more perceived as *zuhud* which is the alienation of self from society and alienate his soul to focus more on performing *mahdhah* (pure) worship. Meanwhile, asceticism according to Max Weber is sensitive to the certainty of what it has as a concern for the formation of motivation that can organize life through the methods that exist in the personal (Max Weber, 1958: 100). *Weber* expects that all basic human rights to justify through confidence in enlightenment with the active individual ratios as each individual is highly qualified to know his or her own true interest. *Weber* declared that the basis of the living, which he regarded as characteristics of modern society who wants to escape from lag. Based on some understanding of asceticism above, it can be concluded that asceticism is an attempt to abstain in a person to limit themselves from mundane problems.

Meanwhile, according to Latief, Ranggawarsita's view of humanization and the morality of life, has followed his footsteps by the Europeans. Before *Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Sartre, Camus*, shout out the morality of life, Ranggawarsita had protested against a life with moral and spiritual degradation and unbearable religious values (Latief, 2008: 170). *Serat Kalatidha* describes Ranggawarsita's humanism and the poets' analysis of their condition which full of hesitation (Latief, 2008: 170). In *Serat Kalatidha*, Ranggawarsita protests against the times and protests against life that devastates the joints of the humanity until it finally sparks the conception of the wacky period (insanity period). Besides, many leaders are seeking profit for self-interest and forget their duty to God, society and country. As a result of that attitude, many people lose their grip. There are many who escape from the reality of life, so they become ignorant. That's what Ranggawarsita did in *serat Kalatidha*, it is a time full of doubts and worries. So that era is also called as a crazy era, that is the age that there is no certainty. Everything goes according to the will of the individual (Purwadi, 2005: 147).

<i>Mangkya darajating praja</i>	(now, the dignity of country
<i>Kawuryan wus sunyaturi</i>	seems so lonely
<i>Rurah pangrehing ukara</i>	the implementation of regulation is damaged
<i>Karana tanpa palupi</i>	because there is no model
<i>Atilar silastuti</i>	all the good rules are violated
<i>Sujana sarjana kelu</i>	many smart people are sluggish
<i>Kalulun kala tida</i>	dragged by the flow of hesitate era
<i>Tidhem tandhaning dumadi</i>	lost the signs of life
<i>Ardayengrat dene karoban rubeda</i>	the misery of the world is inundated with
various disasters)	

According to Ranggawarsita on the 1st verse quotation in *Serat Kalatidha*, Ranggawarsita sees the country in a state of chaos (*rurah pangrehingukara*) the destruction of the state order due to the absence of exemplary leaders (*karena tanpa palupi*). Faced with such an atmosphere, the intellectuals are confused (*Kalulun kalatidha*), let alone the commoners. So, various calamities simultaneously whacked all corners of the kingdom. Ranggawarsita as a royal official was concerned, *kawileting tyas malatkung*. After introspecting himself, it was obviously despicable low (*kasudranira kongas*). This meant that Ranggawarsita was not reckless in dealing with something until it was easy to blame others. Instead of he

saw that he was wrong, for not giving a good example. On the contrary, he blamed himself, so that he felt humble and low. He saw the circumstances of the leaders/ powers and devices was so good, noble and prosperous but still they were unable to stem the turmoil of the era which full of *bebendu* (evil) as described in the third verse as follows:

<i>Ratuneratuutama</i>	(the king is a main king
<i>Patihepatihlinuwih</i>	his governor is so clever
<i>Pranayakatyasraharja</i>	his ministers intent to be safe
<i>Panekarebecik-becik</i>	his troops are good
<i>Paranedene tan dadi</i>	but still they can not
<i>Paliyasing Kala Bendu</i>	to be defender of this cursed era
<i>Mandarmangkinandadra</i>	it is getting worse
<i>Rubedaangrebedi</i>	insolence is so disturbing
<i>Beda-bedaardaningwongsaknegara</i>	many kind of people in this country)

In the verse of *Serat Kalatidha* above, the poet expresses his/her feelings when Ranggawarsita was stricken by trials in the form of secret efforts, thus damaging the ideals of his future, especially in his position as *abdi dalem* or servant. G.W.J. Drewes said that the verses in *Kalatidha* reflect Ranggawarista's disappointment, because the rewards are deemed less worthy of his services (Purwadi, 2003: 227). Based on the story of Ranggawarsita's journey, it is actually not just a disappointment of Ranggawarista due to lack of respect for himself, so that Ranggawarista created *Serat Kalatidha*. There is a very painful heart so that it is not only disappointed, but also the huge anger, although the anger of a servant does not affect anything. Ranggawarsita could not believe it, then he, again, introspected himself and wondered what the point of becoming the leader if he could only plant the bad seeds and when it grew, it would be the fruits of evil, *yen dipikir sayekti, pedah apa aneng ngayun, andhedher kaluputan. But tuwuh dadi kekembang beka.*

<i>Ujaringpanitisastra,</i>	(according to <i>Panitisastra</i>
<i>Awewarahasungpeling,</i>	there is actually a warning
<i>Ingjamankenengmusibat,</i>	in this evil-full era
<i>Wong ambegjatmikakontit,</i>	good people is useless
<i>Mengkono yen niteni,</i>	that's all if it can be assessed
<i>Pedahapaamituhu,</i>	what's the point of listening wrong news?
<i>Pawartalolawara,</i>	if when it is felt
<i>Mundhukangrerantaati,</i>	it will just hurt
<i>Angurbayaangiketcaritengkuna.</i>	For me, the poets are better to make old stories

In the fifth verse above, by adhering to the teachings of *Panitisastra* which reminds us that in a time of disaster, the polite people are left behind and unused, right and wrong are not a problem in life. In this verse, Ranggawarsita holds to the old story which means to stick to the teachings of the better old life.

<i>Kenikinartadarsan</i>	(these stories can be used as the good and bad examples
<i>Panglimbang ala lanbecik</i>	
<i>Sayektiakehkewala</i>	there are many events
<i>Lelakonkangdeditamsil</i>	that worth to be good examples
<i>Malahingngaurip</i>	problems of life
<i>Wahaniniratinemu</i>	thus, the main thing is
<i>Temahananarima</i>	it is better to accept the reality
<i>Mupuspepestheningtakdir</i>	it is a destiny of life
<i>Puluh-Puluhanglakonikaelokan</i>	in the miracelous era)

The ultimate judgment of the Javanese is the maintenance towards the inner balance and the appealing of emotions, to achieve those aims it is expected to develop three attitudes which are also a sign of moral maturity, those attitudes are; patience, *nrima* (acceptance) and sincerity. (Suseno, 1983: 99). Patience means being able to wait for the time calmly in the declaration that what will happen is determined and need not be pressed. *Nrima* or acceptance is the attitude of one who is in the same belief, able to accept bad luck without unhelpful protests and useless emotions, able to continue his/her journey. *sincerity* means willing to give up the valuable things in the realization that the desire to defend is less mature. Including the attitude of *waspada-eling* (introspection), *andhap-ashor* or the willingness to humble and *prasaja* or simplicity of life, etc.

Similar to people in other countries or regions, Javanese have ethical attitudes that are considered very useful when dealing with certain situations or life challenges. In dealing with situations and life's challenges, the ethical attitudes to be taken are considered to have an ability to maintain the model of harmony that is created in society. One of those ethical attitudes is that individuals are required to subordinate their personal interests in order to achieve a harmonious common life. Thus, Javanese ethics is an ethic that covers the overall norms and judgments used by the community to know how humans should live their lives. In the 7th verse, Ranggarsita, again, shows the nature of his wisdom. After discovering the main of problem, then accepting and realizing the provision of destiny. As described in the following verse:

<i>Amenangi jaman edan</i>	(Living in the insane era
<i>Ewuh aya ing pambudi</i>	difficult to determine the attitude
<i>Melu edan nora tahan</i>	can not stand to be crazy
<i>Yen tan melu anglakoni</i>	but if it is not so
<i>Boyo keduman melik</i>	I will get nothing
<i>Kaliran wekasipun</i>	finally starving
<i>Dilalah karsa Allah</i>	the destiny of God's will
<i>Begja-begjaning kang lali</i>	the happiness of forgetful people
<i>Luwih begja kang eling lawan waspada</i>	less happier than the happiness of aware and vigilant people)

Serat Kalatidha verse above contains noble values in the form of maxims and *piwulung* (teachings) of education aimed to people who know him and become the owner of his culture. *Piwulung* contained in the verse is delivered in a language symbol that implies the meaning of context that refers to the mindset of the Javanese. Javanese ethnic is expected to always be *eling* (self-conscious) of God's greatness and *waspada* (vigilant) in every behavior of his life. People who are *eling* (self-conscious) and *waspada* (vigilant) will not be dragged by the circumstances. He is always able to control himself in order to keep walking on the rails of truth, positivity (goodness) and noble character because he knows he is the creature of God. Thus, the one who always is having self-consciousness can avoid from negative deeds and gets the reward from God. For this reason, it is said that the man with self-conscious and vigilant is more fortunate than the one who follows the anger because he is dragged by the crazy era (*zaman edan*) stream.

Ranggawarsita in facing of the trials and turmoil that threaten his life, had chosen the path of wisdom based on his life view. As a Javanese, *Ranggawarsita* kept up to the views or philosophy of his life. Why *Ranggawarsita* did not commit rebellion against the ruler, whereas the authorities are worried about it due to his capability and his many supporters. Why he was willing to sacrifice a great salary from the Dutch government and prefer to serve his king as a servant in the palace, whereas he was able to do so. This is *Ranggawarsita* who has strong grip and principle, *begja-begjane kang lali, luwih begja kang eling lan waspada*. Be alert, be careful of any possibilities that will happen, so it is not surprising if *Ranggawarsita* remained calm in facing all possibilities, including the turmoil of circumstances that threaten himself.

According to Susesno, F (2003: 141) the basic attitude in Java which marks the noble attitude is freedom from self-interest, "*sepi ing pamrih*". Man has *sepi pamrih* attitude if he increasingly no longer need to be restless and concerned about him/herself, the more released from desire to have. A *sepi pamrih* attitude is developed by the Javanese through many detailed attitudes. The characteristic attitudes are a combination of a calm stability, freedom from self-worship and willingness to limit oneself to a role in a predetermined world. The attitudes are about the Divine, about the inner self and about the other people. The realization that we are dependent on the Divine God should always be the background of the Javanese consciousness: "do not forget your origin" is a frequent warning.

People should remember (eling) of Allah and in accordance with the attitude of introspection (alert). People should entrust themselves to the guidance of the Divine. The structure of Javanese ethics is similar to Aristotle's ethical wisdom which bases all attitudes and deeds at the consideration of togetherness. Javanese feel happy when they are able to align themselves with the universal. Fighting self-interest (*berpamrih*) will actually keep happiness away because happiness is union with the Divine. Someone who is wise, all his/her actions should be aesthesis, smooth and beautiful. The good is beautiful and the beautiful is good aligned with the harmony of the universe.

<i>Sagedasabarsantosa</i>	(Hope can always be patient
<i>Mati sajroningngaurip</i>	dead in life
<i>Kalisingreharuraha</i>	avoid from troubles
<i>Murkaangkarasumingkir</i>	avoid from anger and evil
<i>Tarlenmelengmalatsih</i>	nothing else but together in arousing compassion
<i>Sanityasengtyasmematuh</i>	always get used to obedience
<i>Badharingsapudhendha</i>	for punishment (torture of God)
<i>Antukmayarsawetawis</i>	in order to get a lightness
<i>Boronganggasawargamesimartaya</i>	it's up to me a heaven of immortality)

The center of Javanese ethics is an attempt to maintain harmony within society and the universe by having a harmony it ensures the survival which is perceived as value to themselves. But cosmic harmony can only be maintained by all the elements in the cosmos occupying its proper place. The cosmos is an orderly whole where every element has its proper place and as long as the element has its place it will create a calmity and the world will be safe. Ascicologically, Javanese ethics are relatively relative depends on their place. What the individual has to do must be in accordance with his/her place in society and not from the personal will but the demands of his/her place should form his/her attitude.

The most important meta-category of Javanese ethics is that the category of "*sepi ing pamrih*" it means to accept his/her own place and to fulfill the obligation i means to do what each man should do according to his/her place in the cosmos. So the concrete moral demands are inherently relative because they are determined by each individual. Every individual must perform his/her duties which are determined by his/her position in society and by his/her fate. If one is still lustful and *pamrih* or unsincere, it means he/her has not understood his/her place/ position in the cosmos. But to make the individual behave according to his/her cosmic place, it is assumed that he knows his/her obligations. Knowledge is, firstly, obtained from four external sources, namely; the demands of customs, etiquette, hierarchy and harmony. But it is not enough, that man understands that he must live according to those obligations, so having moral behaviour can only be understood within his own mind. The inner man must have such a sense towards his/her position in society and the cosmos, so that he/she understands to fulfill his/her obligations. The more subtle the feelings, the more he can unite with the divine powers of the cosmos and the more true the direction of his life is (Susesno, F, 2003: 201). The core of one's maturity in the Javanese view is in taste, if it can have the right taste, it will bring the right attitude to the cosmos.

Discursus Thought of Serat Kalatidha in Facing Modernity

The Javanese societies as part of the Indonesian nation do not escape from the influence of modernity. As a result of this modernity, many people say that *wong Javanese wis ilang Jawane*, or Javanese people have lost their culture. It is true that people say *wus ilang kedhunge, pasar wus ilang kumandange*. Javanese culture is said to be a culture worthy, full of nuances of philosophy, educative and normative, but now it never gets any attention nor appreciation. It is not surprising that many Javanese today say they do not know their own culture; do not know the virtues and manners. Old principles that should be firmly held as a basis for acting and communicating to maintain social harmony, are now deemed to be no longer valid.

Like *mangan ra mangan yen kumpul* (it is okay whether eating or not as long as we are gathered), *alon-alon asal klakon* (slow but sure), *ana dina ana upa* (there is a day there is rice) and so on, they have been irrelevant and must be replaced with the reverse. Yet these meanings contain deep philosophical meaning. *Mangan ra mangan yen kumpul* reflects the high sociality of Javanese. In contrast to *kumpul ra kumpul yen mangan*, which tells of the high materialist nature of individualisms. *Alon-alon asal klakon* reflects the level of patience of the Javanese, it does not mean they do not pay attention to the goal, but in achieving the goal must be accompanied by patience and caution. *Ana dina ana upa*, it does not reflect laziness, but rather reflects the religiously optimistic nature.

Clifford Geertz (1992: 62-63) argues that Javanese ethics is focused on affection without becoming a hedonist. One must overcome the emotions of everyday life in order to reach the true sense-meaning that lies in him. The more a person has a subtle sense, then he is called the *Java tenanatau* for non-Javanese is called "*nJawani*." For the Javanese, all attitudes to be conveyed to others are first assessed the degree of truth through considerations in the form of logical consequences that will occur if the attitudes happens to himself. Logical consequences, in this case is about the concerns feelings through what may be felt by others. The Javanese recognize this concept with *tepa slira* (self-reflection). *Tepa slira* is part of the concept of taste in Javanese life. According to *Mulder (1996: 23)*, a sense can be described as a feeling of intuition. The categorized taste is related to the heart.

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the Javanese have their own thinking system. The Javanese have mastered logical thinking strategies to address their life. There are several things that underlie Javanese spiritual thinking. First, the country organization's understanding is based on the in the interest of preserving a certain status. This conservation effort is inspired by the regularities in the macrocosm or the great Universe. Man can see the universe in its congenial and harmonious phenomena. Then in adapting his/herself to the great order of the universe, one must accept the concept of harmony as an urgent need. Here harmony is not merely integrated in harmony between the small universe (microcosm) and the great universe (macrocosm), but also the harmony in the inner environment, overall, in Javanese it is called *tentrem*. The Javanese have a very religious view in life. *Neil Mulder* stated that the Javanese, for example, see the dynamics of their lives as part of the macrocosmic movement. According to the Javanese view, the human fate and destiny are determined by the Almighty God. Therefore, under any circumstances, whether rich or poor, people should be *nrimo*. *Nrimo ing pandum* or accepting the fate is one of the teachings of Javanese philosophy. The Javanese say "do not expect to positions or wealth", because they are the decree of heaven. Therefore, in the face of life, the Javanese must be in harmony with nature. This view of life eliminates the greedy and ambitious attitude that can create stress, which makes people unhappy. *Ranggawarsita*, through his *Serat Kalatidhanya*, is trying to remind us of the wacky times, not only reminds us, he also opposes, offers, and fights for a civilization based on the attitude of *eling lan waspada*. A trans-historical and timeless civilization which

can create a new truth that establishes the social ethics of *hayu hayuning bawana*, to live with *tata, titi, lan tentrem*. As the conclusion of this article, it is necessary to reflect for a moment to live the teachings, a powerful weapon to deal with the evolving conditions in human life. The goal is that we remain upright in our own personality. Re-actualize and revitalize our own view of life. It means to keep up with the times but still in the level and corridor of our personality.

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