

Character Value Education in Cirebon Mask

Usep Kustiawan

Malang State University, East Java, Indonesia

Abstract

The existence of mask (*topeng*) in Indonesian culture has been as old as Indonesian man civilization. Its existence had been starting since prehistoric time, developing in classical period with Hindu-Buddha cultural effect, and accomplished during Islam period, until manifested into the mask we know today. All of them are related to the history and development of mask function and use in society life. This article discussed meaning, function, and philosophical value in mask; mask development in Indonesia; mask as the form of Cirebon traditional performing art; typical characteristics of Cirebon mask; character education value in Cirebon mask; and Cirebon mask development in the present.

Keywords: Education, Character value, Cirebon mask

Introduction:

Some Indonesian ethnics know mask (*topeng* or *kedok*) in diverse materials, forms, colors, sizes, expressions, and working techniques with typical characteristics corresponding to cultural tradition of each area. Just like other traditional art form, the process of mask development runs very slowly with its function as a ceremonial vehicle replete with various customary stipulations. With various challenges and time development effects, the existence of mask in some areas still can be conserved. Mask is still present for the utility of various customary events, traditional dance, in addition to be ornamental work and souvenir. *Cirebon Mask* is the example of traditional art conservation still featuring traditional cultural values in such the area.

In traditional art life, the mask use is related to other art form, dance performing art. Mask dance performance in Cirebon area is divided into two: firstly big mask or puppeteer mask called mask puppet, in the form of dance drama such as play delivering a complete story originating from Panji, Damarwulan or puppetry stories, led by a *dalang pematang* like *dalang wayang* (puppeteer); and secondly small mask or *barangan* mask also called *babakan* mask, constituting the presentation of free dances or single dance act by act interrupted with *bodor* or comedy scene.

The form of Cirebon mask performance existing today generally belongs to small mask or *babakan* mask performance type. Meanwhile, big mask or *topeng dalang berlakon* has no longer been performed. Similarly, artifact including guise or mask usually used in big mask performance is found difficultly today in Cirebon area.

Mask as one of Cirebon areas' traditional fine art works has survived from time to time through a long period of time. In its beginning creation and distribution, Cirebon mask existing today cannot be apart from the history of Islam reign establishment in this area because its use in dance performance served as a medium of proselytizing Islam religion. Many argument states that the one creating mask for the first time in Islam period was Sunan Kalijaga, as Pigeaud suggested that the masks were invented by Sunan Kalijaga, he followed *wayang gedog* form, but from the front, and only its face that he made (Pringgokusumo, 1991: 45),

The combination of two cultural elements: Javanese and Sundanese culture, as well as coastal cultural effect, gives distinctive identity to the manifestation of Cirebon mask shape. The effect of "*Tasawuf* and Islam mysticism" can be felt more in the basic concept or philosophical background, reflected on the *wanda* of Cirebon mask containing the meaning of symbolization concerning certain character.

Research methodology

This research was conducted using a descriptive-qualitative method, because in addition to aiming at revealing the data concerning the existence of Cirebon mask in general, it also aimed at getting description of character values in Cirebon mask shape. In this study, the problem statement was limited to the problem of mask existence as the form of fine art work usually used in small or *babakan* mask in some areas in Cirebon.

Data collection was conducted using library study and operational study in the field, encompassing the following activities: (1) written and visual data documentation from books, magazine, journal, newspaper, tabloid, and photographs followed with inventorying process for library study material; (2) interviewing the mask artists and informant, followed with reducing the answers (responses) to be analyzed later; and (3) observation by means of monitoring and taking the picture of object in mask manufacturer and mask dance group followed with the process of classifying visual data as study material.

Research Findings

Cirebon Mask

In Indonesian Language General Dictionary, *topeng* or *kedok* (mask) is defined as the cover of face made of wood, paper, and etc in human, animal shapes or etc (Poerwadarminta, 1976: 1087). Generally, the face of mask is created in caricature (exaggerated) form to get impressive image (Shaddy, 1984: 2359). From several literature of past history, *topeng* (mask) is defined as the cover of face resulting from carved art in the form of human or animal face made of wood, metal, paper, and other materials. Mask has contradictory but united life dualism (two in one life), it is in line with two sides of coin that can be separated from each other (Hidayat dan Pujiyanto, 2014: 25)

Generally, the masks existing in Indonesia can be divided into two types: (1) religio-magical mask, generally serving as a medium of demonstration in ceremony and as magic object. The mask use in

ceremony was conducted by primitive people, closely related to spirit impersonation with human intermediary (Murgiyanto, 1980: 19); (2) profane mask, generally serving as the equipment of dance drama, of party or festival and as ornamental object.

The philosophical values of Indonesian mask include: (1) ethical and moral values in Indonesian mask derived from a variety of "Indonesian original believes" animism and dynamism, from Hindu-Buddha, and from Islam religions; (2) Symbolical values in Indonesian traditional mask are reflected on the elements composing the face of mask including: shape, ornament, and color elements containing certain symbolization meaning.

The development of mask in Indonesia

The existence of mask or guise as the product of traditional fine art started from pre-historic age as seen from the artifact of prehistoric age heritage found in Indonesia. The cave wall painting with hunting and war themes from megalithic age can explain the presence of mask using habit as a medium of demonstration in various ceremonies (Tusan, 1991: 12). This manifestation of mask remains to be seen in ethnic mask of certain Indonesian community that still continues cultural tradition during prehistoric age. The rapid development of mask art occurred during classical time in Indonesia, starting from Hindu age and accomplished during Islam age, with the creation of mask *wanda* representing the character deriving from Panji and puppetry stories. The manifestations of mask we find today are all related to the history and development of mask art work's function or use in society life.

The development of mask cannot be apart from the *wayang* (puppet) development, particularly viewed from its performance technique. Mask performance developed from ancient customs in which guises were a main development of *wayang* and *topeng* (puppet and mask) (R.A. Sardinah S, 1979: 2). Puppet and mask had long been primary presentation in any customary events in traditional society, particularly in Java Island. From its manifestation aspect, the elements of mask shape are not far different from those composing the face of *wayang* (particularly *wayang trimatra*, *wayang gedog*, *golek*). *Wanda* of Cirebon mask is related to that in *wayang golek menak* and *wayang golek cepak*.

The process of creating and distributing traditional mask in Cirebon area cannot be apart from the history of Islam reign establishment in this area. During the reign of Sultan Cirebon, Syekh Syarif Hidayatullah called "Sunan Gunung jati" cooperated with Sunan Kali Jaga and his disciple, Pangeran Panggung, raising mask art to be spectacle in the palace serving as the guidance in the attempt of spreading Islam tenets. However, in its development, mask art flourished among ordinary people, spreading to the rural areas and becoming popular folk performing art, performed by mobile (street) artists called *topeng barangan*.

There are two forms Cirebon mask performance, generally: big and small masks, that in its development process generates the new style-mask dance form, including *Topeng Kreo*, *Topeng Badaya*, *Topeng Dinaan* or *Hajatan*, *Kupu Tarung* and etc. Observing various performances existing today, mask dance in Cirebon area generally shows identity as small mask or *topeng babakan*. In its performance, it only presents free dances without intact connection to its story source.

The types of dance in small mask or *topeng babakan* performance consist of: main dance the dancers of which wear the mask of main characters or *tarian bodor* or comedy dance, the dancers of which wear the mask of *panakawan* character. Main dance includes *topeng Panji*, *topeng Pamindo I and II*, *topeng Rummyang*, *topeng Tumenggung* and *topeng Klana* dances. *Bodor* or comedy dance or *panakawan* dance

includes *topeng Tembem*, *topeng Pentul*, *topeng Jingganom*, *Togog* topeng dances, and etc. The performance of each mask characters in dance wearing different fashion types with different accompanying song and *gamelan* music.

Cirebon traditional mask originally came from and showed similarity to that from Central Java (Solo-Yogyakarta) area, but in its development it can feature its distinctive style. From the result of development for many centuries until reaching the typical mask shape of Cirebon area, the manifestation of Cirebon traditional mask constitutes the result of acculturation process from various cultural motives (pre-Hindu, Hindu-Buddha, Islam, and Chinese).

The characteristics of effects various cultural motives have on Cirebon traditional mask are, among others: (1) the characteristic of pre-Hindu effect can be seen from the presence of *barongan* or *berokan* mask, in which its manifestation reveals primitive characteristics, and has shared function with primitive mask, as a medium of warding off disaster related to magic activity; it can also be seen from the presence of *panakawan* character in comedy dance, the folk character less known in Hindu age in Indonesia; (2) the characteristics of Hindu effect can be seen from attribute and ornament in several main mask characters, for example the presence of “*kembang kliyang*” ornamental motif having meaning like “*urna*” motif constituting the ornament of forehead in the Hindu-Buddha fine art figures; (3) the characteristics of Islam effect can be felt more in the definition of basic concept philosophically in the manifestation of mask character. These Islam effect characteristics include the equipment in the dance performance of non-cult character, but only as a symbol of human characterization serving moral tenet and Islamic ethics; ornament or attributes applied constituting the siltation of natural shapes, represented in subtly rather than realistically; and (4) the characteristics of Chinese effect can be seen from the presence of a Chinese character mask, *kedok Cina* called *Senting Praya* usually performed in big mask performance; the presence of salted egg color element use in some head ornament or mask crown of certain character; and in fashion outfit worn by the mask dancer.

Character Education Value

Wanda in Cirebon mask is not only limited to a face of mask that can be absorbed visually, but it is also related to the form of mask dance performing art and context. It means that *wanda* is comprehensive in nature pertaining to physical condition (mask shape, fashion and make-up, stage condition and etc); dancer's body movement, character's dialog sound, accompanying music, and *kawih pesinden*, *antawacana* of story element or scene delivered by puppeteer; performance environment condition, and etc.

The data identified from the shape of Cirebon mask representing the character consisted of: (1) Shape element, including face, eye, eyebrow, mouth, and nose shapes; (2) color element, including basic color of face and color; (3) ornament element, including hair, mustache, beard, *godeg*, crown, *kembang kliyang*, *pilis*, *gari*, and dot (point) ornaments. The working of shape elements represents *wanda* or typical characteristics of Cirebon mask art encompassing: (1) *Liyepan* or *Lenyepan* called *satria alus* (refined knight), for example mask character of Panji; (2) *Lanyapan* or *Ladak* called Pamindo encompassing male character of *Pamindo Gimbal*, female character of *Pamindo Galuh*; (3) Rumyang, a kind of *Pamindo Gimbal*; (4) *Ponggawa*, the class of mask playing the kingdom character as *patih* official, such as *Tumenggung*; (5) Danawa, the class of mask playing a crude bad character such as *Klana*; (6) *Bapang*, the class of mask playing a king family or bourgeoisie character, such as *Jingganom*.



Panji

Pamindo Gimbal

Pamindo Galuh



Rumyang

Tumenggung

Klana

Viewed from the fine art aspect, the classification of *wanda* or character above still can be detailed again into varieties or nuances of both color and manifestation aspects. It can be seen in only the characterization of big mask or *topeng dalang* delivering a complete story plot.

In the manifestation of Cirebon mask, there is a concept putting the character type or trait into the basis of expressing its shape's beauty. In the context of Cirebon traditional art, there is a relationship between mask (*topeng*) and puppet (*wayang*); it can be seen not only from its playing (performing) technique, but also from its *wanda* working. It can be seen, among others, from some similarities between mask-composing elements with puppet face-composing elements, namely three-dimension puppet such as *wayang cepak* and *wayang golek*.

Traditionally, Cirebon mask, viewed from its composing elements, color, and ornament, and basic concept of mask characterization, is considered as having philosophical meaning building on belief or trust in the truth power of "*Tasawuf* and Islam mysticism". The sequence of dance, movement register and mask character type register in Cirebon mask art is the representation of human type levels in mastering Islam tenets.

As the time progresses, Cirebon mask art formerly related to ritual ceremony based on religious values, currently leads to the secular entertainment performance. Cirebon mask as a typical type of traditional art

has been reengineered now by many people for various interests. A variety of changes begin to emerge, pertaining to either its performing art or shape manifestation or mask function. Many dance groups only feature free dance with energetic dances and dominated with comedy and *dangdut* song accompanying. Meanwhile, the type of *topeng besar berlakon* has no longer been performed, although in this big mask that *wanda* is very functional to identify the character of characterization. The producers of Cirebon mask currently pay less attention to the quality of art work corresponding to the tradition *pakem*, because in addition to not understanding the meaning, they also emphasize on the target order according to the consumers' taste in order to meet the family's economic need.

The function of Cirebon traditional art is formerly as a medium of belief ritual ceremony, and then as the cover of dancer's face, and now as the commodity to be used as ornament or souvenir. In the attempt of meeting tourism need, ornament mask develops in a variety of shapes, sizes, and functions. For example, ornament mask for guestroom, for hang above dashboard, for gratitude in wedding, birthday party, circumcision, and key hook.

In the presence of changing shape, size, and function, the raw material to produce mask not only from wood material, but now there are cement, plastic, ceramic clay, gypsum and other materials. Similarly, casting technique can also produce one mask repeatedly.

The consumers of Cirebon mask formerly only the association of mask dance existing surrounding Cirebon now are getting wider, from art education institution, mask art collector, offices, hotels, to handicraft kiosks in tourist objects, both around Cirebon area and in other big cities such as Bandung, Jakarta, Bogor and etc.

Conclusion:

Mask is the cover of face resulting from carved art in the form of human or animal face made of wood, metal, paper, and other materials. Generally, mask can be divided into two types: religio-magic and profane masks. The philosophical values of Indonesian mask include: ethical and moral values in Indonesian mask deriving from a variety of "Indonesian art believes": animism and dynamism, from Hindu-Buddha and Islam religions; and symbolical values in Indonesian traditional mask are reflected on the elements composing mask shape, including: shape, ornament, and color components containing meaning of certain symbolization.

The presence of mask in Indonesian culture has been as old as Indonesian man civilization. Its existence had been starting since prehistoric time, developing in classical period with Hindu-Buddha cultural effect, and accomplished during Islam period, until manifested into the mask we know today. The development of mask cannot be apart from the effect of puppet development, particularly from its performance technique, in which puppet and mask had long been primary presentation in any customary events in traditional society, particularly in Java Island.

Cirebon mask (*kedok* or *topeng*), viewed from its use in dance today, belongs to small mask performance type, constituting the free dance act by act rather than delivering *topeng Panji*, *topeng Pamindo I and II*, *topeng Rumyang*, *topeng Tumenggung* and *topeng Klana* dances; and Bodor or comedy dance including *panakawan* dance: *topeng Tembem*, *topeng Pentul*, *topeng Jingganom*, *Togog* *topeng* dances. From the result of development for many centuries until reaching the typical mask shape of Cirebon area, the

manifestation of Cirebon traditional mask constitutes the result of acculturation process from various cultural motives (pre-Hindu, Hindu-Buddha, Islam, and Chinese).

Character education values can be seen from *wanda* working or the characteristics in Cirebon mask art include: *Liyepan* or *Lenyepan* called *satria alus* (refined knight), for example mask character of Panji; *Lanyapan* or *Ladak* called Pamindo encompassing male character of *Pamindo Gimbal*, female character of *Pamindo Galuh*; Rumyang, a kind of *Pamindo Gimbal*; *Ponggawa*, the class of mask playing the kingdom character as *patih* official, such as *Tumenggung*; Danawa, the class of mask playing a crude bad character such as *Klana*; *Bapang*, the class of mask playing a king family or bourgeoisie character, such as *Jingganom*. In Cirebon traditional society, mask art contributes to social-cultural life, as a medium of proselytizing Islam religion, of worshiping ancient spirit, of entertainment, and as the basic parameter of local art.

Cirebon mask develops continuously interacting with the ever changing surrounding situation. Some new vocabularies are developed but some other are lost. In mask or guise as the form of fine art, a number of *wanda* is no longer found now. Such this condition is due to many factors, particularly economic one. Cirebon traditional art functions formerly as a medium of belief ritual ceremony, and then as the cover of dancer's face, and now as the commodity to be used as ornament or souvenir. In the attempt of meeting tourism need, ornament mask develops in a variety of shapes, sizes, and functions. For example, ornament mask for guestroom, for hang above dashboard, for gratitude in wedding, birthday party, circumcision, and key hook.

Practical suggestions:

In relation to the achievement of this research objective, this study only presented the result of research on Cirebon mask from one problem side, the result of study on the shape of mask usually worn in small mask or *topeng babakan* performance only. The shape of mask existing in this small mask performance has not been able to represent comprehensively the shape of mask character by character like usually used in large mask or *topeng dalang* delivering Panji story completely. Similarly, the *wanda* of mask existing in this small mask has not been able to represent the *wanda* of Cirebon mask completely yet. For that reason, there are still many problems requiring further research specifically pertaining to Cirebon mask. And various attempts, such as conducting a research as recommended in this writing, will be beneficial to the future existence and conservation of Cirebon traditional mask art in particularly. Thus, this survival of traditional art is not highly dependent on its working artist only, but also needs our real attention.

References

- Hidayat, Robby & Pujiyanto (2014), *Open Your Mask: Traditional Paradox of Mask Puppet of Malang, East Java, Indonesia*, Japan: Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, Vol. 3(1) February 2014
- Mehravani Hussain, M. (2011). Effect of implementation of talent management on organizational performance (PMO studied in Gilan province), MSc Thesis, Faculty of Humanities, University of Guilan.
- Mobini, M. (2006). Work, talent and education, life magazine, saying, 30: 110- 115.

- Moderator, Fatah and Hamoudi, J. (2006). The relationship between creativity managers improve employee performance in the oil. *Research Extension Management Journal*, 3 (7): 80-89.
- Murgiyanto, Sal M dan Munardi, A.M. (1980). *Topeng Malang: Pertunjukan Dramatari Tradisional di daerah Kabupaten Malang*, Jakarta: Proyek Sasana Budaya Ditjenbud Depdikbud.
- Poerwadarminta, W, JS. (1991), *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia*, (Cetakan Kedua Belas). Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- Pringgokusumo, KRTM, Husodo. (1991), *Pertunjukan Rakyat Jawa*, Solo: Rekso Pustoko Istana Mangkunagaraan.
- Sadeghi, Ali Mansour, Hassan Zadeh, A., Bagheri, the power of God; Amiri, Ali Naqi (2012). Internal and external factors affecting customer satisfaction in Salehin credit and financial institutions (banks and future), the Fourth Conference on Marketing of Banking Services, Tehran, IRIB International Conference Center.
- Saidi, N., Karimkhani, MJ and lively wine, S. (2012). Evaluate the impact of intellectual capital on employee performance across the organization. *Rubber Industry Quarterly*, 16 (65): 58-66.
- Salehi Kerdabad, Mazandaran, S. (2010). The relationship between innovation and performance. Third National Conference of creativity, TRIZ (TRIZ) and engineering and management of innovation. Tehran: Tehran home teacher.
- Sardinah S, RA. (1979), *Topeng Cirebon*, Bandung: Proyek Pengembangan Institut Kesenian Indonesia Sub Proyek ASTI Bandung
- Schweyer, A. (2004). *Talent Management Systems, Best Practices in Solutions for Recruitment, Retention and Workforce Planning*, Wiley, New York, NY.
- Shaddly, Hasan (1984), *Ensiklopedi Indonesia 6*, Jakarta: Ichtiar Baru Van Hoeve
- Soemardjo, Jakob. (2002), *Tafsir Kosmologi Topeng Cirebon dalam Pergelaran Topeng Cirebon*, Bandung: Produksi Studio Tari Jurusan Tari STSI Bandung.
- Tusan, Nyoman dan Wiyoso Yudoseputro. (1991), *Topeng Nusantara*, Jakarta: Proyek Pembinaan Media Kebudayaan