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Exploring the Mindset of Wonosari Village Citizens in the Mantra of the Grebeg Memetri Tradition, Tutar District, Pasuruan District (Ethnosemiotic Study)

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ABSTRACT

In the Pasuruan Regency of East Java Province, specifically in the Tutar Subdistrict, there is a village called Wonosari that holds a unique traditional ceremony to honor God, seek His blessings, and request safety from disasters for the village. The villagers of Wonosari conduct this traditional ceremony, which involves oral literature in the form of mantras. The mantras used in this tradition serve as prayers and are recited during the ritual burial of a cow's head in the center of the market. The mantras are recited by the village elders or traditional shamans during the ceremony. During the execution, the mantras are chanted aloud and listened to by the villagers of Wonosari in a solemn atmosphere. The traditional ritual of burying a cow's head in the village of Wonosari is known as Grebeg Memetri. The term "Grebeg" originates from a royal tradition aimed at distributing agricultural produce as charity to the people. The existence of mantras in the Grebeg Memetri tradition reflects the mindset of the village residents. This mindset is closely related to matters of belief, mythology, and experience. The villagers' mindset can be discerned from the oral traditions recited by the traditional shamans during the Grebeg Memetri ceremony. Investigating the mindset of the residents of Wonosari is intriguing, considering various aspects such as belief, mythology, and experience that accompany it. Given the issues described above, this research aims to examine the mindset of the residents of Wonosari through the oral tradition of Grebeg Memetri. To investigate the mindset of the villagers as manifested in the oral tradition of Grebeg Memetri, a literary approach called ethno-semiotics is required. Ethno-semiotics is an interdisciplinary field that combines ethnography and semiotics. The use of the ethno-semiotic approach is expected to represent the mindset of the residents of Wonosari based on the sign systems found in the oral tradition of Grebeg Memetri.

Keywords: Grebeg Memetri; Mantra; Ethnosemiotic

INTRODUCTION

The existence of Indonesian culture encompasses tradition as an inseparable aspect. Tradition is something that is never finished or halted at a single point. The uniqueness of tradition in Indonesian society lies in its inheritance from generation to

generation. These traditions manifest gratitude and are deeply rooted in customs to understand the meaning within a ceremony.

Oral tradition is a part of oral literature (Andharu et al, 2023.p.134). Oral literature is the expression of culture and its transmission from generation to generation (Hutomo, 1991, p.1). Furthermore, oral literature is considered a manifestation of the evolving cultural heritage and its transmission through oral communication (Hasuna & Komalasari, 2018, p. 47). It is also viewed as having a significant value in connection with literary appreciation and development.

Indonesia is a country that has long believed in the existence of oral literary traditions. The presence of oral literature has become a cultural heritage for the various ethnic groups in Indonesia (Khusna, 2023.p.41). Indonesian ethnic groups have long been inspired and believed in the existence of oral literature (Semi, 1993). Even after written traditions developed rapidly, this form of literature is still frequently encountered.

Oral literature needs to be preserved by maintaining its cultural essence. This is because oral literature serves as living proof of human life from ancient times. Additionally, oral literature also reflects various phenomena that have occurred in the history of human civilization (Showren, 2014). One form of oral literature that can be found in traditional ceremonies is mantras.

Old literature can be divided into three categories: folk poetry, folklore, and folk theater. Folk poetry includes poetry forms like syair, pantun, gurindam, karmina, and mantras (Taum Yosept Yapi, 2011, p. 65). Literary scholars have concluded that mantras represent the early form of Indonesian poetry (Taum Yosept Yapi, 2011, p. 50). Mantras are oral literature that has been passed down orally, and there is no written evidence of when, by whom, and how these mantras were first created. Mantras are recited by specific individuals at particular places and texts, and they are chanted to evoke hidden magical powers (Amir Adriyetti, 2013, p. 67). When viewed in terms of its form, mantras are a form of folk poetry (Danandjadja, 2007, p.56) due to their uniqueness.

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In the province of East Java, specifically in Pasuruan Regency, there is a village in the Tukur Sub-District that has a unique traditional ceremony to honor God, seek His blessings, and request safety from disasters. This village is called Wonosari. The traditional ceremony of the Wonosari village residents involves oral literature in the form of mantras. Mantras in this tradition serve as prayers and are recited during the ceremony for burying a bull's head in the midst of the marketplace. The mantras are recited by the traditional leaders or shamans during the ceremony, and they are listened to attentively by the residents of Wonosari in a solemn atmosphere.

The tradition of burying a bull's head in the Wonosari village is known as "Grebeg Memetri." "Grebeg" originates from the tradition of the king giving offerings in the form of agricultural produce to his subjects. Grebeg is also known as an enduring ritual closely associated with Islam.

In the context of beliefs, Grebeg has been practiced since 1506 AD during the Majapahit era. The Javanese Kings have continuously organized a sacrificial

ceremony, where a wild male buffalo is slaughtered as an offering to the spirits of the ancestors. The existence of mantras in the Grebeg Memetri tradition reflects the thought patterns of the village residents. These thought patterns are closely related to beliefs, myths, and experiences. These thought patterns can be discerned through the oral traditions recited by the shamans in the Grebeg Memetri tradition. Exploring the thought patterns of the Wonosari village residents, in the context of their oral traditions, is intriguing due to the inclusion of beliefs, myths, and experiences.

Based on the issues described above, this research will investigate the thought patterns of the Wonosari village residents through the oral tradition of Grebeg Memetri. To examine the thought patterns of the Wonosari village residents found in oral traditions, an approach from the field of literature, namely ethnosemiotics, is needed. Ethnosemiotics is an interdisciplinary field that combines ethnography and semiotics. Semiotics is a field of science that studies the role of signs as part of social life (Rahayu, 2021, p.31). The use of the ethnosemiotic approach is expected to represent the thought patterns of the Wonosari village residents based on the sign systems present in the oral traditions of Grebeg Memetri.

METHOD

The approach of this research is qualitative. There are two kinds of data sources, namely: primary and secondary data sources used in this article. The primary data source is oral literature in the form of mantras in the Grebeg Memetri tradition. Secondary data sources are knowledge of local culture, articles and semiotic research journals via the internet.

The data in this study are in the form of words, expressions, sentences contained in the mantra of beheading a cow in the Grebeg Memetri tradition. The data collection techniques for this research are (1) primary observation of the Grebeg Memetri tradition done by residents of Wonosari village in Tukur district; (2) the recording is audio-visual, while its picture is recorded using a tape recorder, handycam, and the like, (3) exploratory interviews related to the Grebeg Memetri tradition of Wonosari village residents in Tukur district.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Beliefs

The oral literature in the form of mantras found in the Grebeg Memetri traditional ceremony of the residents of Wonosari village represents the belief system adhered to by the surrounding community. The belief system in question is related to the religion followed by the residents of Wonosari village. This belief system has been adhered to by the people of Wonosari village from ancient times. The Grebeg event is a tradition that embodies values closely related to religious teachings (Millah et al., 2022, p. 112). Concerning how this culture is preserved, the people of Wonosari village continue to believe in the presence of religion in their lives, and none of the villagers deny the power of God in their lives. This is evident in the spoken text of the mantras

recited by the chanters. Here is a quote from the data found in the Grebeg Memetri tradition mantra:

*"Ashadualillahailallah wa ashadu anna Muhammadan Rasulallah
Assalamualaikum salam"*

The above data represents the belief held by the residents of Wonosari village. This data shows the recitation of the mantra, which is preceded by the Shahada and a greeting in the Arabic language. This indicates that one of the religions followed by the majority of the residents of Wonosari village is Islam. In Islam, the Shahada statement is a key element of embracing the religion and is a mandatory statement when performing prayers.

Etnosemiotic research is used to uncover the beliefs, myths, and knowledge present in the Grebeg Memetri mantra. Beliefs are one of the aspects that can be discussed or revealed because of the connection between the signification in oral literature produced by a specific ethnic group.

Furthermore, there is other data that also represents the beliefs of the residents of Wonosari village. This is evident in the mantras recited by the Elder of Adat during the Grebeg Memetri event. Here is data representing beliefs:

"Bapak adam ibu howo"

The above data reflects the beliefs of the residents of Wonosari village. In the above data, the recitation "Bapak Adam Ibu Howo" refers to Prophet Adam and Siti Hawa. As known, Prophet Adam is the first human created by Allah SWT. After the creation of Prophet Adam, Allah also created Siti Hawa as his life partner in heaven. The creation of Prophet Adam and Siti Hawa signifies that they are the father and mother of all humanity on Earth. In the data above, the recitation of these words is a way of seeking blessings to ensure the safety and well-being of the village of Wonosari.

In addition to the above data, there is also other data showing the beliefs held by the residents of Wonosari village. This data not only includes Prophet Adam and Siti Hawa as in the previous data but also indicates the existence of other creations of Allah mentioned in the recitation. Here is the data in question:

*"Sak tekone para malaikat
Sak tekane para nabi"*

The above data indicates an invitation or reference to angels and prophets. This is done by the chanter as a way to seek their blessings and hope that their intentions for the safety of the village of Wonosari will be granted by God. The people of Wonosari believe that everything that happens is due to God's will. Therefore, the recitation of the mantra refers to all things solely in the hope of God's approval, as shown in the following data:

*"Monggo kulo aturi dhahar sesarengan kabeh seng mbaurekso
moco patih danyang banyu deso wonosari kulo nyuwun idih pangestune
sampeyan jangkung paringono rahayu slamet, slamet, slamet sangking kersane Gusti Allah"*

The above data shows the desires of the people of Desa Wonosari. These desires include the wish for safety granted by God, as evident in the recitation "...paringono rahayu slamet, slamet, slamet sangking kersane Gusti Allah." When it comes to matters related to beliefs, the data reveals that the beliefs of the people of Wonosari uphold the values of religion and a belief in God.

B. Myths

Myths are a collection of beliefs that do not necessarily need to be supported by scientific facts. Myths are also seen as another aspect of signification that marks a community (Yelly, 2019, p. 122). Myths are often associated with the supernatural. Myths are also viewed as part of the cultural identity of a particular group. The Grebeg Memetri mantra represents the existence of myths believed by the residents of Wonosari village. Myths are an integral part of the prevailing mindset and beliefs of the residents of Wonosari village.

The data in the Grebeg Memetri mantra includes a reference to Nyai Roro Kidul, a mythical figure believed in by most Javanese people who reside in the southern coastal regions. This figure is also believed to represent the queen of supernatural beings. Therefore, the presence of Nyai Roro Kidul in the Grebeg Memetri mantra aims to protect the village of Wonosari from the influence of supernatural beings.

Belief in Nyai Roro Kidul has become a myth in Indonesia, handed down from generation to generation. This myth shapes the mindset of an individual. In the Grebeg Memetri tradition, the residents of Wonosari believe that Nyai Roro Kidul will assist in the intentions of the Grebeg Memetri tradition with the offering of incense. This can be seen as a myth that is believed and forms the mindset of the people of Desa Wonosari.

Other data related to myths in the Grebeg Memetri tradition mantra indicates the belief in supernatural beings that guard the village of Wonosari. This figure is also mentioned in the recitation. Here is the data in question:

*"Seng mbaurekso moco patih tendeh ukire danyang banyu deso wonosari
Lan seng bedah krawange deso wonosari lan seng mbaurekso moco patih pasar deso wonosari"*

The above data is the recitation of the Grebeg Memetri tradition mantra, which shows the myth related to the guardian spirits of Wonosari village. In the data above, it can be translated as follows: "The Guardian Moco Patih Tendeh, in the form of a Spirit, is the guardian of the waters of Desa Wonosari. Also, the one who opens up the territory of Desa Wonosari and the one who protects Moco Putih in the market of Desa Wonosari." According to this translation, Moco Patih is portrayed as the guardian spirit of the waters of Desa Wonosari. Water is a vital element in the life of

the residents of Desa Wonosari. This is due to the fact that the main source of income for the residents of Desa Wonosari comes from the sale of vegetables. Therefore, offerings to Moco Patih, who is believed to be the guardian of water, need to be made in the Grebeg Memetri tradition. This, of course, is considered a myth that is believed and shapes the mindset of the residents of Desa Wonosari.

Additionally, there are other myths related to offerings and supernatural beings mentioned in the data. This data shows the myths related to media or objects offered, such as incense, and supernatural beings that protect Desa Wonosari. Here is the relevant data:

*"Limo tengah iso nang nduwur kabeh
Sedoyo monggo kulo aturi dhahar sekul arum petak rupane gurih rasane arum gandhane."*

The above data reveals the myths believed by the residents of Wonosari village. These myths encompass media or objects offered, such as incense, and supernatural beings that watch over Desa Wonosari. The data can be translated as follows: "Five centers can be in all directions. Let's all offer incense, white in color, delicious in taste, and fragrant in scent." From this translation, it indicates the mention of supernatural beings in the cardinal directions. "Limo Tengah iso nang nduwur kabeh..." refers to supernatural beings guarding the residents of Wonosari. Limo Tengah refers to the cardinal directions and Tengah as the central one. Moreover, based on the location of Desa Wonosari, it indicates that Limo Tengah also refers to the location of the village's market.

The market is the economic center of Desa Wonosari. The Grebeg Memetri tradition was not held by the residents of Desa Wonosari for a period, and this resulted in various disasters affecting the village. These disasters included fires, accidents, and thefts in the market area mentioned in connection with Limo Tengah. With the occurrence of these events, the residents of Desa Wonosari believe in the myth of supernatural beings that need to be offered. This, of course, shapes the mindset of the residents of Desa Wonosari, so the Grebeg Memetri tradition is still held today.

In addition, there are myths related to the media or objects of offering, which can be seen in the data above. The media or object of offering in question is incense. The sentence "Sedoyo monggo kulo aturi dhahar sekul arum petak rupane gurih rasane arum gandhane." is the manifestation of incense offered to the supernatural beings guarding Desa Wonosari. The myth of incense is associated with supernatural beings, as most people believe that burning incense will attract supernatural beings because the aroma of the burning incense is pleasing to them.

C. Knowledge

Knowledge is a part of the mindset contained in the Grebeg Memetri mantra. Knowledge is information that is known and recognized (Ridwan et al., 2021, p. 33). The existence of knowledge is related to the mindset. The mindset indicates the presence of knowledge in the residents of Wonosari village. This research aims to

explore the mindset contained in the Grebeg Memetri mantra. The knowledge in the form of patterns is found in the recitation of the Grebeg Memetri mantra. Here is the data that illustrates the knowledge in the Grebeg Memetri mantra:

*"Kaping kaleh kulo ngaturi jagad wetan
Sak derenge kulo ngaturi jagad kidul
Kuo ngaturi jagad kidul
Sak derenge kulo ngaturi jagad kulon
Kulo ngaturi jagad kulon
Sak derenge kulo ngaturi jagad lor
Sak derenge kulo ngaturi jagad ngisor
Sak derenge kulo ngaturi jagad nduwur"*

The above data shows the knowledge contained in the recitation of the Grebeg Memetri mantra. The knowledge in question involves recognizing the pattern that is present in the Grebeg Memetri mantra as well as other mantras. These patterns provide insight into knowledge for mantra chanters. Furthermore, the knowledge insight within the mantra indicates that the essence of culture in oral literature also contains knowledge held by a particular ethnic group.

The pattern found in the Grebeg Memetri mantra is a call to deities or spirits in the cardinal directions. The cardinal directions referred to are west, east, north, and south. This pattern shares similarities with mantras from Hindu religious teachings or in Javanese customs and arts. Some examples of mantras with the same pattern as the Grebeg Memetri mantra are mantras in the Sandur dance in Kediri. The Sandur dance mantras contain calls directed to deities in the cardinal directions. The same pattern is also found in the mantra for land allocation. The mantra for land allocation begins with calls to supernatural beings, spirits, and ancestral spirits, followed by calls to the guardians of the upper and lower worlds. The mantra for land allocation took place around the 8th to 15th century.

Patterns such as this are derived from Hindu religious teachings. As is known, Hinduism has long been embraced by the Javanese people. In the era of ancient Javanese culture, the guardians of the cardinal directions were known as deities. However, during the Islamic period, this practice might have faded. The people started to view these deities as supernatural beings.

During the Hindu period, the guardians of the cardinal directions were known as Catwari Lokapala. Catwari Lokapala are deities located in the four main cardinal directions. Catwari Lokapala consists of Indra in the east, Yama in the south, Nirruti in the southwest, Waruna in the west, Wayu in the northwest, Kuwera in the north, and Isana in the northeast.

CONCLUSION

This research yields three parts. First, belief pertains to matters related to religiosity and is found within the mantras. Second, Myths involve beliefs in

supernatural elements and turn them into the identity of the traditions or culture of the people in Wonosari village. Third, Knowledge relates to the similarity in the patterns of the Grebeg Memetri mantras with other mantras. The same patterns indicate the influence of Hindu culture still existing in the Grebeg Memetri mantras, even though the mantras have been influenced by ISLAM.

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/2

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 3

PAGE 4

PAGE 5

PAGE 6

PAGE 7

PAGE 8

PAGE 9
