

## Sociological Aspects and Local Specificity in the Classical *Ketoprak* Script of Surakarta Style

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### Abstract

*Javanese literary works are reflections of the scriptwriters' real world. Ketoprak script is one of the literary works of the traditional Javanese drama genre. There are several kinds of ketoprak scripts in Java and each region has different aspects. Each ketoprak text can reflect the social condition of its native area when analyzed by sociological literary-approach. Sociology of literature is a study that connects literature with its social reality. Classical ketoprak script of Surakarta style viewed from the perspective of sociological literature is a reflection of the socio-cultural life of the community in Surakarta. It is seen from a socio-historical perspective, socio-cultural, and linguistic aspects used in the classical ketoprak script of Surakarta style. These three aspects make the classical ketoprak script of Surakarta style has a local specificity and characteristics that distinguish it from other Javanese literature.*

**Key words:** *sociological aspect, local specificity, Javanese literature, classical ketoprak script*

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### Introduction

Literary works in general have three genres, namely poetry, prose, and drama script. In Javanese literature there are also three genres. Javanese poetry is called *kakawin*, *kidung*, or *geguritan* in modern Javanese poetry. Javanese literary works in the form of prose can be found in the form of Javanese novels, short stories (*cerkak*), running story (*cerbung*), and many more. Javanese drama is a literary work that consists of several dialogues as the main element and story. Some examples of drama script in Javanese literature are *wayang kulit script*, *wayangwong script*, *sandiwara Jawa script*, and *ketoprak script*. As a drama script, *ketoprak* contains the reference of players' or characters' dialogue in *ketoprak* performance (Lisbiyanto, 2013).

In the beginning, *ketoprak* did not use the script. Instead, it used casting techniques

or *Penuangan*. *Penuangan*, according to Setyawan (2016: 58) is the presentation of storyline that will be performed by the *dalang* or *ketoprak* director shortly before the show. In this process *dalang* or *ketoprak* director only conveys the storyline of the story as well as the distribution of characters for each scene. The players come before the stage, then *dalang* begins to tell story to be staged from the beginning until the end. Therefore, players are required to understand the sequences of the story that will be staged through the casting given by the director. In this period, *ketoprak* players are required to have the ability to create and develop dialogues based on the role and storyline played at that time.

Over time, the number of *ketoprak* fans gradually decreases. This is due to several factors. Firstly, *ketoprak* is stagnant and boring. This is influenced by the coming of electronic cinema using advanced technology

that can produce interesting visual effects. People, as the result, tend to watch electronic cinema rather than *ketoprak* performance. Secondly, it is because of some internal factors. The staged story tends to be the same from time to time and seems to be repeated, so the audience became bored. Thirdly, the language is difficult to understand. The message of *ketoprak* story cannot be directly accepted by the society. Fourthly, the process of regeneration of artists and perpetrators of *ketoprak* is not effective. If a senior *ketoprak* artist is retired, it will be hard to find the substitute because young people have difficulties in learning *ketoprak* using *penuangan* techniques. The difficulties lie in creating and developing dialogue in order to fit the characters, storylines, and conflicts that occur.

One of the ways to facilitate the younger generation to learn *ketoprak* art is to create a *ketoprak* script as a reference for dialogues, characters, storylines, and conflicts in *ketoprak* staging. *Ketoprak* script is same with other drama scripts because it contains aesthetics elements of a literary work, thus it can be paralleled with poetry and prose (Waluyo, 2006: 2). Using *ketoprak* scripts, *ketoprak* players who are still in the learning level can easily interpret the story and conflict, as well as explore the characters played. In this context the text of *ketoprak* as a source of the story that must be interpreted by all the staging elements before performing of *ketoprak* (Satoto, 2012: 65). Elements of *ketoprak* staging are not only players, musicians, and the director, but also lighting crew, setting arrangers, property designers, sound system director, and costume and make-up crew. The use of script in *ketoprak* staging was applied by *ketoprak* group of RRI Surakarta in the 2000s. Since then on, the director of *Ketoprak RRI Surakarta* group has been using the script in the staging of *ketoprak*, to make it easier for the players to interpret the story. The *ketoprak* script not only includes the dialogue, but also the scene settings, scene illustration, and technical instructions used by players as the basis for acting on the stage. The director of *ketoprak*, therefore, should know the script-writing technique, in this case the *ketoprak* script.

The points to be addressed in the writing of the *ketoprak* text include the theme of the story, the structure of the conflicts (which must be clear and sharp), the choice of language used in the dialogue, the description of each character, and the dramatic plot in the script.

As a social art, *ketoprak* represents social portraits of the society. It is called folk-art because in its early history *ketoprak* was created and developed by its society. The first stage of *ketoprak* was performed by some farmers as an expression of gratitude for the harvest. Initially *ketoprak* was performed by bringing onto the stage stories of daily social problems. Within the performance was dances and songs were sometimes included. It made *ketoprak* condensed with the characteristics of the folk art (Purwantoro, 2016; Hughes & Freeland, 2008). Just like *ketoprak* performance which is a folk art, *ketoprak* script, too, is a representation of the social life. *Ketoprak* script also contains social realities occurring in the author's. The classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style was created by *Ketoprak* artists from Surakarta.

In this study, *ketoprak* scripts were taken from *Ketoprak RRI Surakarta* group which started using scripts in 2000. Therefore, the classical *ketoprak* analyzed in this study is classical *ketoprak* scripts of Surakarta style written after the 2000s. The approach used to analyze is a sociological approach. Using sociological approaches the phenomenology and social construction of the world (*lebenswelt*), the language and knowledge of the social world, and the ideology underlying the creation of literature works are revealed (Satiyoko, 2012: 3). The purpose of using the sociological approach is to analyze the social aspects of the classical, post-reformation, Surakarta *ketoprak* script. Furthermore, this study also analyses the special features contained in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style which distinguish it from the classical *ketoprak* manuscript. The scripts to be compared are the script of *ketoprak Metaraman* from Yogyakarta, the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style, the script of East Java *ketoprak*, and the Coastal

Ketoprak script from the northern coastal area of Java (Pati, Purwodadi, Rembang, and Blora).

## Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative descriptive research using sociological approach. The focus of this study is directed at the detailed and in-depth description of the social and local aspects of the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style. The *ketoprak* texts used in this study are selected from several manuscripts representing the classical *ketoprak* scripts of Surakarta style, written by *ketoprak* artists from Surakarta. The manuscripts used as the sample in this study are the script of *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang*, *Bedhah Kartasura*, and *Adeging Praja Surakarta*. The choice of these samples is based on purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique determines the samples according to the data sources which are considered important related to the problems being investigated. This technique does not consider the data sources as representatives of the population, but representatives of information in general (Sutopo, 2002: 36).

The techniques used in collecting data are recording and writing, with in-depth interviews with *ketoprak* artists, and also with experts in literature and culture. The data found from the three *ketoprak* texts are then analyzed using content analysis techniques, with data reduction stages, data presentation, and data verification (Moleong, 2014). This study also uses triangulation techniques to test the validity of the data. It is expected that the data and results of the research on the social and local specificities in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style can be unraveled scientifically.

## Result and Discussion

### Sociological Approach

Sociological approach is one of the branches of literary theories that discusses its relationship with society. The sociology of literature was originally developed in France,

in 1791, by Jonathan Herder (1744-1803). Herder asserted the relationship of literature and culture, race, customs, and social institutions. Hippolyte Taine, a literary expert from England, in 1871 was said to be the Father of Sociological Literature. Taine argues that literary works are a national monument that represents the consciousness of society and spirit of the times. The theory of sociological literature by Hippolyte Taine was later developed by Lucian Goldman who tried to connect art and society.

The development of Goldman's theory is the birth of genetic structuralism theory which discusses the relationship between the socio-cultural background of the author and the literary work. Goldman's view of the socio-cultural background of the author which influence the process of literary creation was reinforced by Leo Lowenthal. In 1961, Lowenthal sparked a theory of the sociology of literature. According to Lowenthal, the authors are indeed developing characters and are believed to place them in situations involving interaction with others and with the communities in which they live. The task of literary sociologist is then to find the relationship between the author's imaginary characters and the historical climate from which they originated. The latest theory of sociological literature was triggered by Robert Escarpit, in 1970, describing the reader as a cultural consumer in literary work (Jadhav, 2014). In other words the sociology of literature also emphasizes the aspect of readers of literary works.

From the above explanation, sociology of literature is divided into three parts: the sociology of the author's context, the sociology of literary works as the mirror of the society, and the sociology of the readers, as the consumers of literature (Faruk, 2012). This article specifically discusses the sociology of literary works, namely to look for social aspects and local specificity features within the classical *ketoprak* scripts of Surakarta style. The social aspects of the classical *ketoprak* scripts of Surakarta style are viewed in terms of socio-historical, sociocultural, and socio-linguistic aspects.

### Socio-historical Aspects in Classical *Ketoprak* Script of Surakarta Style

The *ketoprak* script used as an object in this article is a *ketoprak* script written by a *ketoprak* artist from Surakarta. The story of *ketoprak* is a representation of events that occurred in the past that tell about life and all the struggle in the kingdom of Java (Saddhono and Setyawan, 2015). The classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style tells the story of the historical value of the Islamic kingdom of Mataram. The *ketoprak* script does not contain history as a whole, but only contains some historical facts which are already adjusted by the author to create dramatic elements such as the character of the setting or the scene. There are similarities of problems or conflicts in the text of *ketoprak* to the historical documents (Farhah, 2015: 34).

The classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta entitled *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang* has the setting of time of Pajang Kingdom. The Kingdom of Pajang was established in 1568-1586 AD. The Kingdom of Pajang was led by a King named Sultan Hadiwijaya. The text of *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang* tells about the rebellion conducted by Arya Penangsang, a Prince from Jipang Panolang, (now the district of Cepu, Blora Regency). The rebellion of Arya Penangsang was driven by the cooperation among Danang Sutawijaya, Ki Ageng Pemanahan, Ki Ageng Penjawi, and Juru Mertani. Eventually Arya Penangsang was killed by Danang Sutawijaya using the Spear of Kyai Pleret which is now a symbol of armor heritage in Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace.

In the script "*Bedhah Kartasura*" the setting is when the Mataram Kingdom was moved from Pleret to Kartasura, to the west of Surakarta City. It is written in *Babad Tanah Jawi* that the palace of Mataram Kartasura was established around 1705-1719 AD (Fawaid, 2015). The perpetrators were similar: Mas Garendi, Susuhunan Pakubuwono II, Raden Mas Said, Prince Mangkubumi, and the Dutch (the VOC). The conflict, too, was almost the same: the revolt

led by Raden Mas Said, Prince Mangkubumi, and Mas Garendi, assisted by the Chinese ethnics. The ending of this civil war was the Giyanti Treaty in 1755, which divided the kingdom of Mataram into two areas, namely Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat and Kraton Yogyakarta Hadiningrat (Arifin, 2013).

The setting in *Adeging Praja Surakarta* was Sala Village, the place chosen for the construction of the Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace. In *Babad Tanah Jawi*, it is mentioned that the year of the establishment of Surakarta Kingdom was 1745 AD. The characters in the story are Sunan Pakubuwana III, Kyai Ageng Sala, Kyai Hasan Besari from Ponorogo, and of course some people of Sala Village. In general, *Adeging Praja Surakarta* is about the polemics in the establishment of Surakarta Kasunanan Palace, starting from the choice of the place: Sukoharjo or Kadipolo. Finally Sala Village was chosen as the location for Surakarta Kasunanan Palace (Monfries, 2015). Until now some areas mentioned above can be found around the Surakarta Palace.

If reviewed in depth, historical information can be found in the scripts of *ketoprak*. The three scripts above, for example, contain historical information that includes the settings of places, characters or historians, and the conflicts, which are similar to the ones in historical documents. In addition, the settings of places of the three *ketoprak* scripts above are not far from Surakarta City. Thus, the representation of social life of the three *ketoprak* script is not far away from the social life of the community in Surakarta.

### Socio-cultural Aspects in Classical *Ketoprak* Script of Surakarta Style

Literary works reflect the proportion that humans have: past, present, and future life. Therefore, the values in literary works are living and dynamic ones. However, the data found in literary works may not necessarily be justified into absolute facts. Data in literary works must still be interpreted and analyzed using the discipline tailored to the original purpose (Sipayung,

2016). A literary work, in the sociology of literature, is considered to reflect the spirit and socio-cultural situation of its time. The classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style tells the story that happened in the Islamic kingdom of Java. So, the socio-cultural portraiture in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style is about the social-cultural life of the community of the Islamic kingdom of Java.

The text of *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang*, first of all, reflects the portraiture of the situation during the time of the Pajang Kingdom. At that time, the people of Java embraced the traditional government system, *i.e.* feudalism, where the royal and noble groups were highly respected (Hastuti, 2011: 146). *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang* presents feudalism system of Javanese society. The feudal system can be seen from the differences in the treatment and attitude shown by characters from different social degrees. People with high social degrees, such as kings, queens, ministers and government officials, were more respected than ordinary people. This can be seen from the difference in their language, which is *krama inggil*. This kind of language is considered more subtle.

This can also be seen from their attitude. When speaking to the King, the soldiers or other royal officials should show worship and ask for permission first. The people in *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang* understand that "the king's words are a command" or "*sabda raja adalah perintah*". The king's words in the ancient Java is irrevocable (or unable to be withdrawn) order, thereby arising a phrase "*Sabda Pandhita Ratu tan kena wola-wali*." The words and statement from a King must be executed and cannot be changed. King's statement is regarded as a gift received in the *samadi* process and his communication with God. In addition, the king's statement was also used as a means of legitimacy for traditional Javanese political leadership (Widjaja, 2016: 42).

The second script is the *Bedhah Kartasura* which tells about the revolt of Raden Mas Garendi against the Mataram

Palace that allegedly has a political relationship with the VOC. Here lies the sense of nationalism from Raden Mas Garendi. Nationalism is a condition of unity where one of loyalty is totally devoted to the State, country, on behalf of a nation (Syarbaini, 2010). Mas Garendi and some people of Kartasura chose to rebel against Mataram Kingdom because at that time Mataram was under the influence of the Dutch colonialists. Such a situation affects every decision and rule of the king which is always in favor of the colonialists. Raden Mas Garendi rebelled because he wanted to defend his homeland and his culture. Javanese culture must not be taken by the colonialists. The script of *Bedhah Kartasura* portrays the spirit of nationalism in the people who tried to expel Dutch colonizers from Indonesia.

For the third text, *Adeging Praja Surakarta*, the spirit of mutual cooperation when building the civilization of the Surakarta Palace is portrayed. The spirit of mutual cooperation is there, regardless of one's position and rank, whether one is a noble, a scholar, a public figure (*Ki Ageng Sala*), or just a common person.

### **Socio-Linguistics Aspects in Classical *Ketoprak* Script of Surakarta Style**

The language in literary works is the medium to deliver the author's ideas. In the script, the language is used in the dialogues and it reflects the character and the social degree. The language in the literary work is influenced by the background and the sense of literature possessed by the author. The author's local origin also determines the language used in literary works. This is related to the variety of languages or dialects used. Dialect is a language that is specifically used in an area (Kristanti, 2017). The difference among the dialects are seen from the choice of words, the accents, and the intonation (Yunus, *et al.*, 2016).

In the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style, the language used is Surakarta dialect. This is evident from the language used in the dialogues. This fact cannot be separated from the fact that the

author is actually a *ketoprak* artist from Surakarta. Therefore, the background of the script writer is very important in determining the language used. It can be said that the language used in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style is the language derived from Javanese dialect (Saddhono and Rohmadi, 2014).

To elaborate the analysis of the language used in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style, the study compares it to the language used in *ketoprak* texts from other areas. For example, when compared to the text of *Ketoprak Metaraman* from Yogyakarta, both of the texts show similarity because they use one of Javanese language varieties called *Basa Bagongan*. However, when viewed from the choice of words, the two texts show differences. The Surakarta style text uses "*inggih*" while *ketoprak Mataraman* from Yogyakarta uses "*injih*." Although both of them mean "yes", the two words are local dialects of different areas. The word "*inggih*" is commonly used by

people in Solo/Surakarta to express "yes". "*Inggih*" comes from the Javanese variant called *krama inggil*, a variant considered to have more value of politeness compared to the other variants, *ngoko* and *krama* (Poedjosoedarmo, 2017).

The word "*sendika dhawuh*" in classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style, has another variant, "*kasinggihan*," in the text of *Ketoprak Metaraman* from Yogyakarta. When analyzed linguistically, the two lexicons have the same meanings, namely expressing willingness. Normally, the two lexicons are used when receiving a command from the boss, either from the king or the royal superior who has the higher rank. Some other variation of the language seen in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style compared to the text of *ketoprak* in other areas as follows:

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<i>Kene</i> : meaning here	><	<i>Ndene</i> (in the text of <i>ketoprak metaraman</i> Yogyakarta)
<i>Kana</i> : meaning there	><	<i>Ndana</i> (in the text of <i>ketoprak metaraman</i> Yogyakarta)
<i>Piye</i> : how	><	<i>Yok apa</i> (in the text of <i>ketoprak Jawatimuran</i> from East Java)
<i>Kowe</i> : you	><	<i>Sira</i> (the text of <i>ketoprak Jawatimuran</i> from East Java)
<i>Rada</i> : somewhat	><	<i>Rondok</i> (the text of <i>ketoprak pesisiran</i> from north Javanese coastal area)

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From the above examples, it is seen that differences and variations in language distinguish the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style with the texts of *ketoprak* from some areas are due to the different dialects used in the areas. This cannot be separated from the fact that Javanese language has various dialects: *Banyumasan* dialect, *Solo-Yogya* dialect, coastal dialect, *Jawa Timuran* dialect, and *Banyuwanginan* dialect.

## Conclusion

*Ketoprak* script is a type of literary work included in the genre of the theater or traditional Javanese drama. *Ketoprak* script is used in the staging of *ketoprak* which is a type

of *folk art*. Thus, it represents the social life. The classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style reflects the social aspects of Surakarta community. It cannot be separated from the author who is a *ketoprak* artist from Solo/Surakarta City. Using sociological approach that tries to reveal the relationship between literary work and the social structure of the society, some sociological aspects in the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style are found. From the socio-historical point of view, the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style brings stories that have a socio-historical background from the city of Surakarta. The script tells about the story of the Islamic empire in Surakarta.

From the socio-cultural point of view, the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style

reflects the social situation in the Islamic empire in Surakarta. The three texts, *Kuncarane Kraton Pajang*, *Bedhah Kartasura*, and *Adeging Praja Surakarta* reflect the socio-cultural conditions of the kingdom set as the background of the texts. From the linguistic point of view, the languages used in the three texts are languages derived from Javanese dialect of Solo/Surakarta.

From these three aspects, it is observed that the classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style has some differences with the *ketoprak* scripts from other areas. This becomes a local specialty and characteristic of classical *ketoprak* script of Surakarta style.

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