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**Da'wa In The Performance Of The Lakon Durga Ruwat**

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**ABSTRACT :**

Javanese culture are now underestimated in some circles, whether they are described as ancient or outdated. But what you need to know is that Javanese teachings have an extraordinary da'wah value. This research focuses on the content of the message of the da'wah wayang wong performance which takes the theme of ruwatan sudamala, packaged in the form of a performance, with the play "Durga Ruwat", which was staged at Lotus Garden, Ketanon Village, Kedungwaru District, Tulungagung Regency. The qualitative descriptive method is the method used in research, which focuses on the message of da'wah involved in performance. On the basis of the results obtained, the teachings of Islam and Java have a continuity or similarities that are not very different. Long before the entry of religion, the Javanese were already familiar with God's teachings, known as the teachings of Sangkan Paraning Dumadi. Islam came in to perfect the Javanese teachings, and then the preachers of the time proceeded to cultural acculturation, that is, the combination of Islamic da'wah, using puppet media. The history of wayang at that time had undergone many changes, and Islamic da'wah messages had been inserted, the main teachings inserted into it, namely akidah, sharia and morality.

**Key words:** *Da'wah message, Durga Ruwat, Wayang Wong*

## INTRODUCTION

Da'wah is an obligation for Muslims. As Allah says in the Qur'an, Surah Ali 'Imran verse 104, which explains that among the believers there should be a group of people who invite to goodness, order to do what is right, and forbid to do what is wrong. Da'wah is carried out with the aim of bringing behavioral changes to society to become better.

Da'wah means a call, invitation, and appeal. Da'wah is an effort to convey Islamic teachings that is carried out consciously and deliberately, to invite others to follow the goals of da'wah without coercion by using certain methods.<sup>1</sup> Da'wah can be done anytime and anywhere. It does not have to be done verbally. Da'wah can be done through good deeds that can remind and encourage others to do good too. Through various flexible da'wah strategies, Islamic teachings can be accepted by all levels of society.

M. Arifin explains it in his book *Psychology of Da'wah: Introduction to the Study*. Da'wah is an invitation activity, both verbally and in writing (behavioral), which is carried out consciously to influence others, both individually and in groups, in order to improve understanding, appreciation, attitude of appreciation, and experience of the teachings of a religion. as a message sent to him without coercion.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, an interesting da'wah media is needed to achieve the goal of da'wah and to maximally disseminate the material given by the Da'i to Mad'u. One of them is a fairy tale or story. There are certainly many stories in this world, even in each country and region they are very diverse. Among them are the stories of

<sup>1</sup> Nurwahidah Alimuddin, "Konsep Dakwah Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Hunafa* 4, no. 1 (2007), h. 74.

<sup>2</sup> M. Arifin, *Psikologi Dakwah Suatu Pengantar Studi* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 1993), h. 17.

the prophets, stories of people in ancient times, local legends, historical stories, myths, and others. One of the interesting stories is the puppet story written by Sunan Kalijaga.<sup>3</sup>

The story of wayang is a regional culture that can enrich the national culture of Indonesia. Iman Musbikin explained that "wayang is a means of education both moral and religious, a means of social entertainment, a means of earning a living, and as a reflection of values and aesthetics. As a means of education, wayang can offer values and teachings that can be emulated by the audience".<sup>4</sup>

It is widely known that every wayang story contains a message or moral. Wayang stories can shape character and educate society to be better by internalizing the messages contained in it. By understanding the contents of the wayang performance narrative as if the community were watching it and recording it consciously or unconsciously, then all the events and incidents in the play have been unconsciously recorded by Mad'u.<sup>5</sup>

The wayang performances that are commonly performed are wayang kulit and wayang wong. In general, the content of the wayang story is the same, the difference is the media used. It is very clear from the name, wayang kulit uses leather media that is formed in such a way that it becomes a wayang character, while wayang wong is performed by humans.

Wayang wong has existed since the Ancient Mataram era of Central Java (8th to 10th centuries).<sup>6</sup> On average, the stories presented are stories about the Ramayana and Mahabharata. The ancestors wrote the stories of the Ramayana and Mahabharata by reading temple reliefs. The story of the wayang wong is a fictional story that has been modified from the works of previous ancestors. Although it is a fictional work, the wayang story provides many lessons. Nowadays, wayang wong is rarely performed. As a form of preservation of wayang wong art, one of the communities in Tulungagung, namely the Cikat Trengginas Wayang Wong Community, has revived the existence of wayang wong art to the general public. The wayang wong performance was held on July 30, 2023, at Lotus Garden, Ketanon Village, Kedungwaru District, Tulungagung Regency, with the play "Durga Ruwat".

Based on the explanation above, the purpose of wayang performances is not only as entertainment, but also as guidance (learning).<sup>7</sup> Because the language used is Javanese (Basa krama alus), few people know what the story of the play is about. Based on this idea, the author wants to study further the message of da'wah in the Wayang wong story with the play "Durga Ruwat". The author's search for previous research that is relevant to this research includes a thesis written by Khuril Aini which focuses on reading the values of Islamic education in the ruwatan tradition which are classified as i'tiqodiyah, amaliyah, and khuluqiyah values.<sup>8</sup> Thesis of Iip Ahmad Abdullatip (2022) entitled "Message of Da'wah in the Video of the Wayang Golek Performance of the Play 'Arjuna Jaya Maruta' by Ki Dalang Apep A.S. Hudaya". The research focuses on the video performance of Ki Dalang Apep A.S. Hudaya, who uses the media of preaching puppets.<sup>9</sup> Then Noval Tri Suci's thesis (2023) entitled "Semar's Preaching Message in the Puppet Show of the Lakon Kitab Satra Jendra Rahayu Ningrat Ki Dalang Asep Sunandar Sunarya (Giri Harja III)" the puppets used by Ki Dalang Asep Sunandar Sunarya, aim to attract the audience's interest in enjoying the preaching he conveys.<sup>10</sup> Donny Khoirul Aziz's journal entitled "Acculturation of Islam and Javanese Culture" his research is about the entry of Islamic teachings on the island of Java,

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<sup>3</sup> Aji Wibowo, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Kisah Wayang Purwa Lakon Dewa Ruci" (Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama' Jepara, 2018), h. 1-2

<sup>4</sup> Imam Musbikin, *Serat Dewa Ruci (Misteri Air Kehidupan)* (Yogyakarta: Diva Press, 2010), h. 247.

<sup>5</sup> Wibowo, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Kisah Wayang Purwa Lakon Dewa Ruci.", h. 3-4

<sup>6</sup> Dwi Wahyudiarto, *Wayang Wong Lakon Lumbung Tugu Mas Dalam Upacara Suran Di Desa Tutup Ngisor, Kabupaten Magelang* (Surakarta, 2009), h. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Erwan Puji Rahayu, "Peningkatan Keterampilan Menyimak Dongeng Melalui Model Paired Storytelling Dengan Media Wayang Kartun Pada Siswa Kelas Ii Sd Ngebel Tamantirto Kasihan Bantul" (Universitas PGRI Yogyakarta, 2016), h. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Khuril Aini, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Islam Dalam Tradisi Ruwatan Di Desa Gumelar Kecamatan Balung Kabupaten Jember" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri Jember, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Iip Ahmad Abdullatip, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Video Pementasan Wayang Golek Lakon 'Arjuna Jaya Maruta' Oleh Ki Dalang Apep A.S. Hudaya" (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> Noval Tri Suci, "Pesan Dakwah Semar Dalam Pagelaran Wayang Golek Lakon Kitab Sastra Jendra Rahayu Ningrat Ki Dalang Asep Sunandar Sunarya (Giri Harja III)" (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2023).

and the acculturation carried out by preachers at that time. Cecep Whinarno and Bustanul Arifin's journal entitled "Da'wah Message in the Wayang Kulit Performance of the Play "Ma'rifat Dewa Ruci" by Dalang Ki Enthus Susmono" using semiotic analysis, this study focuses on one of Ki Enthus Susmono's wayang kulit performances.<sup>11</sup> Several relevant studies used as comparative materials, none of which have specifically examined wayang wong performances, so this study focuses on the wayang wong scene from the performance of the Ciklat Trengginas Wayang Wong Community with the play "Durga Ruwat", to analyze what da'wah message was conveyed in the performance. From the results of the observations made, the wayang wong was rarely performed in Tulungagung, and the language used was Javanese, Basa Krama. So a special explanation is needed to find out what da'wah message was conveyed.

## METHODS

The study method used in this study is qualitative research that is descriptive qualitative. The subject of this study is ruwatan sudamala, and the object is the Ciklat Trengginas wayang wong performance with the play "Durga Ruwat". The achievement indicator of the research conducted, namely the visibility of the message of da'wah through communication media in the wayang wong performance with the play "Durga Ruwat". Data collection techniques are carried out through observation and interviews. The interviews used are semi-structured interviews.

The observations carried out in this study are participant observations, in which the researcher is directly involved in the wayang performance activities. While making observations, the researcher also does what the data source does, and also participates in feeling the joys and sorrows. By carrying out this participant observation, the data obtained will be more complete, sharp, and to the point of knowing the level of meaning of each behavior that appears.

Data collection was carried out using the interview method because the data extraction process can be carried out in a relaxed and free manner, so the interview was chosen as a semi-structured interview method. This semi-structured interview aims to find problems openly, where the interviewee is asked for their opinions and ideas, this is because when conducting an interview, the researcher needs to listen in detail and record what the informant has said. There are two sources in the interview. The primary source is someone who holds the wayang wong performance, and the secondary source is a cultural activist. This interview also aims to complete the data, to answer the formulation of the problem.<sup>12</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Lakon Durga Ruwat

It is rarely held in Tulungagung, a Wayang Wong New Ciklat Trengginas community held a wayang wong performance with the theme of ruwatan sudamala. The performance raised the play "Durga Ruwat". In addition to preserving Javanese culture which is rarely performed, the wayang wong performance is also a means of introducing Javanese culture to young people.

The phenomenon that is currently occurring among young people, they have begun to forget the traditional culture inherited from their ancestors. They are actually proud of foreign cultures which do not necessarily have a positive influence. Therefore, with the current phenomenon, the Wayang Wong Ciklat Trengginas community tries to package the wayang wong performance so that it can be enjoyed by all groups, especially young people.

Forming a team that is mostly young people, is the initial strategy, the Wayang Wong

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<sup>11</sup> Donny Khoirul Azis, "Akuturasi Islam Dan Budaya Jawa," *Fikrah: Jurnal Ilmu Aqidah dan Studi Keagamaan* 1, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>12</sup> Cecep Whinarno and Bustanul Arifin, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Pementasan Wayang Kulit Lakon 'Ma'rifat Dewa Ruci' Oleh Dalang Ki Enthus Susmono," *Jurnal Kopis: Kajian Penelitian dan Pemikiran Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam* 2, no. 1 (2019).

Cikat Trengginas Community in sparking the interest of young people. The extraordinary enthusiasm of these young people, has a great influence on the continuation of the preservation of Javanese culture. This is because if these young people do not want or are indifferent to Javanese culture, then it is only a matter of time until this wayang wong culture becomes extinct. After the team is formed, the training process begins immediately. In general, the team is formed into two parts, namely the karawitan team and the dance team. Continued with the division of tasks. The team that is included in the dancers or actors, is divided into their respective roles. Some of the characters performed in this performance include: Bathari Durga, Bathara Guru, Pandawa, Pasukan jim, Bathari uma as a form of the goddess of purity, Semar as a mediator who is tasked with correcting wrong actions. The division of the karawitan team sees what musical instruments are needed and uses sufficient musical instruments, including: Kendang, Bonang, Kenong, Gong, Slenthem, Gender, Demung, Saron, Peking, Rebab, Sinden, Wiraswara.

Night is the time for the implementation of the wayang wong performance. The wayang wong performance was held at Balai Soehartini, Lotus Garden, Ketanon Village, Kedungwaru District, Tulungagung Regency. The event was attended by approximately 50 people, consisting of various groups, including local residents, high school students, students, and also presenting speakers for a discussion at the end of the event. Before the performance process was carried out, the entire team involved held a sugengan alit or selamat which aims to be a request for safety in the implementation. In addition, the procession is one form of a series of events that are religious in nature, this is because the play being performed is one type of ruwatan play that aims to strengthen vertical and horizontal relationships. When they first set foot in Balai Soehartini where the event was held, the audience was treated to gamelan music in the pre-performance session. At the beginning of the performance, the karawitan team played Gending Ladrang Sri Slamet laras pelog pathet barang, as a symbol of welcome, as well as a symbol of prayer, for safe arrival at the performance hall. In addition, it also adds to the sacredness of the performance venue, around the hall incense is installed as a room freshener, there are also several offerings. Before the wayang wong performance took place, with the play "Durga Ruwat".

The wayang wong performance tells the story of a female god or in the puppetry term Bathari, named Durga, the god committed a sin that caused her to no longer be a god. The sin committed was a mistake made by Bathara Guru for his arrogance as a leader and role model for both gods and humans. This can be seen in the excerpt of the script that was presented. Based on the review contained in one of the scene segments that have been performed, it can communicate a message to the audience that the recommendation of the value of truth must be carried out by all creations. Directly the meaning of preaching about faith must be carried out. Based on the explanation above, it can be seen as a symbol of the justification of faith that can be seen in the play. This statement can be seen in the segment of the play Bathari Durga must carry out a purification process or the elimination of sins by means of ruwatan. This ruwatan is called ruwatan Sudamala which functions as a means of self-purification so that positive energy and negative energy in the body can be balanced which aims to eliminate sins. The results of the performance can be seen in a mantra that is uttered, the mantra is called caraka balik. This mantra is taken from Javanese script, which is read in reverse. So after this ruwatan procession is complete, Bathari Durga has returned to being a god, and returned to her place of origin. Wayang wong can be used as a medium for preaching. Along with the development of the era, wayang wong has also undergone many modifications. However, the noble values contained are still maintained until now. There are several messages of preaching contained in the wayang wong performance with the play "Durga Ruwat".

A message is information sent to the recipient of the message.<sup>26</sup> Based on the origin of the word (language), da'wah comes from the Arabic da'a, Yad'u, Da'wan, Du'a which means "call, invitation or appeal".<sup>27</sup> This term is given the same term as the terms tabligh, amr ma'ruf and nahi mungkar, mauidzoh, hasanah, tabsyir, indzar, wasiyah, tarbiyah ta'lim and sermon.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, according to terminology, da'wah is an invitation or appeal to anyone, to carry out orders and leave things that are prohibited by Allah and His Messenger.

29 According to Wardi Bachtiar, da'wah is an effort to change a situation to another situation that is better according to Islamic teachings, or a process of inviting humans to the path of Allah, namely Al-Islam. 30 Da'wah is an effort and activity in the form of speech or actions that contain an invitation or call to others to know, appreciate, and practice Islamic teachings in everyday life, to achieve happiness in the world and in the hereafter, this definition is according to Fathul Bahri An-Nabiry. 31 Based on the explanation above, the message of da'wah is the content of an effective communication message to the recipient of da'wah. In essence, the content of Islamic da'wah depends on the goal of da'wah achieved. Islamic teachings must be preached by all Muslims, both individually and together with a group of people, therefore, da'wah must continue to be carried out. The message of da'wah is none other than Al-Islam whose main sources are the Qur'an and Hadith, and covers various fields of knowledge: faith, sharia, and morals. Therefore, the message of da'wah or da'wah material is the content of da'wah delivered from Da'i to Mad'u and originates from the Islamic religion.<sup>32</sup> Samsul Munir Amin clarifies da'wah material in three main issues, namely Akidah, which means about faith, then Sharia, which is about Islam, then morals, which is the problem of character.<sup>33</sup>

### **Wayang Stories as a Da'wah Media**

Wayang is one of the heritages of the Indonesian nation that has developed for centuries. History records that wayang performances began to be known and performed since the Balitung era around 907 AD. Brandes stated that wayang had existed since the Prapanca era around 778 AD. Meanwhile, Hiding said that wayang had been performed since the Megalithic era around 1500 years before Christ.<sup>13</sup> Before wayang wong was known, there was wayang kulit art.

According to RM. Sajid, during the Majapahit Kingdom, it was famous for playing Wayang Beber, the form of which had changed since the era of the Islamic Demak kingdom (the era of the Guardians), this wayang had undergone major changes. This is like a new look. This change means that not only the scenes are painted together on one sheet, but also since the time of the saints, each figure is painted in detail, separately from each other.<sup>14</sup>

The wayang plays that were created were activities carried out by Javanese poets always adjusted to Islamic teachings. Of course, the majority of Javanese people are Muslim so that the color and values of Islam have a very large influence on the creativity and innovation of new works as a whole. For example, the play "Jimat Kaliamasada" is a symbol of the two sentences of the Syahadat.<sup>15</sup> Especially for the saints and other preachers, wayang functions as a means for the media of preaching Islamic teachings, which is effective based on historical experience.

Wayang was once used by the saints to spread Islamic teachings so that they would be embraced by Javanese people from the lower middle class to the upper class.<sup>16</sup>

The great effectiveness in conveying moral messages, so it is not surprising that preachers use wayang story media to mix and create the preaching material they convey to be more interesting and leave an impression on the minds of their listeners.<sup>17</sup>

Wayang is a regional culture that enriches Indonesian national culture. Wayang is used as a means of preaching both morally and religiously, entertainment, a means of earning a living, and as a reflection of values and aesthetics. As a means of preaching, values and teachings can be emulated by the audience in wayang performances/stories, because wayang performances are made in such a way with various innovations.<sup>18</sup>

Every wayang performance is expected to provide motivation to create an aesthetic experience, in addition to other goals such as conveying messages, propaganda entertainment,

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<sup>13</sup> Purwadi, *Dakwah Sunan Kalijaga* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2007), h. 174.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, h. 176.

<sup>15</sup> Wibowo, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Kisah Wayang Purwa Lakon Dewa Ruci.", h. 33.

<sup>16</sup> Purwadi, *Dakwah Sunan Kalijaga*, h. 181.

<sup>17</sup> Wibowo, "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Kisah Wayang Purwa Lakon Dewa Ruci.", h. 34.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

and others. An aesthetic experience does not necessarily have to be beautiful, it can also be scary, exciting, touching, and so on. Currently, many puppeteers are often given various tasks by officials when performing wayang. However, large tasks should not be migrated via delegation.<sup>19</sup>

In relation to da'wah, works of fiction have a central role in conveying moral messages, ethics, morals, etiquette and manners. The stories presented, either implicitly or explicitly, always contain a moral message, hope for honesty, and persistence in facing problems.<sup>20</sup> It is clear that shadow puppet stories can be used as intermediaries to convey da'wah messages to recipients of da'wah.

After experiencing developments over time, originally wayang was only made from carved leather, then it was innovated by being demonstrated by humans, with the term wayang wong. Wayang wong is a puppet show performed by humans (wong). The relevance of the message of the creed of the wayang wong play "Durga Ruwat" with the message of Islamic da'wah, namely, the message of da'wah becomes a guideline as an effort to form a pious nature. Therefore, Da'wah aims to guide and optimally develop the potential of Mad'u to return to the path of Allah SWT, namely to be pious. The characteristics of a believer include believing in the supernatural, performing prayers, spending part of one's sustenance, believing in the Qur'an and other holy books, and believing in the existence of the afterlife. As is known, da'wah is the formation of a Muslim personality whose content is the full practice of the teachings of Allah SWT. and His Messenger. But the Muslim personality will not be achieved or developed except through teaching. So, with da'wah humans can become pious people (muttaqin) or in other words the value of piety cannot be achieved except through teaching. On that basis, the process of preaching messages is intended to realize the goals of Islamic preaching, which include creating a faithful and pious personality, instilling pious people and perfect people. In addition, to obtain a level of piety, we are also ordered to maintain our prayers because prayer is a pillar of religion that can support piety as the Prophet and the salaf scholars did.

The message from the first scene is the nature of Tawakal. Bathari Uma surrenders to God, so Bathara Guru changes it to Bathari Durga. It is necessary to improve oneself by interpreting tawakal as a form of full surrender that what Allah gives us is the best for us so that humans need to try and pray and always be grateful for what Allah has given us.

The relevance of the sharia message of the play "Durga Ruwat" with the message of Islamic preaching is that humans are never free from sin, so to atone for these sins, they can be melted by means of praying to ask for forgiveness. Scene eight is Bathara Guru's attempt to purify Bathara Durga so that she can return to being the form of Bathari Uma, a means of praying to Gusti Kang Ngakaryo Jagad. The relevance of the moral message in the play "Durga Ruwat" with the message of Islamic preaching is that manners are above all else. It is explained in scene six, although Bathara Guru's position is higher than Semar, Bathara Guru remains obedient to Semar as an older brother.

## CONCLUSION

Da'wah can be done by anyone, and can be done in various ways. One of the media for Da'wah can be in the form of entertainment. The Wayang Wong Ciklat Trengginas performance simultaneously contains entertainment and guidance given. Based on the wayang wong performance with the play "Durga Ruwat" there is a message of Da'wah conveyed from the story. The message of Da'wah contained in the performance of the Wayang Wong Ciklat Trengginas Community with the play "Durga Ruwat" contains a message of faith, namely tawakal or surrender to Allah SWT. While the message of Sharia is praying as an effort to ask Allah SWT. The message of morality is in the attitude of respect for older people, even though they have a high position. This message of Da'wah can be seen in scenes one, six, and eight in the Wayang Wong Ciklat Trengginas performance of the play "Durga Ruwat".

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., h. 35.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., h. 36.

Islamic preachers are expected to not only take exemplary examples from Arab figures, but also from historical figures of regional culture that are certainly in accordance with the character of the local community. Because, local cultural wisdom and existing potential are expected to be a means of media for Da'wa .

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