

# Logic Interrelation of Embedding the Word "*Kyai*" in the Gamelan Ensemble (A Cultural Deconstruction Process)

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**Abstract.** Some Heirloom Gamelan which are considered sacred by some cultural areas, have a place of honor with the title "Kyai". This phenomenon must be able to be read in the context of local culture which is currently still being used by the supporting communities. For example, in the palace areas which are quite large and still exist today, namely the Yogyakarta Palace and the Surakarta Palace. Outside the palace area, a similar designation occurs in wider society with the term "Ki". The reading in question can be approached as a theoretical proposition through Derrida's theory of Deconstruction with its binary option which allows for two-way conclusions, namely factual justification or rejection of those deemed too far-fetched. To reveal all the premises that might occur in people's lives, finally a research was carried out using qualitative methods with an emic approach which took data sources through literature studies and Personal Narratives.

**Keywords:** Gamelan art; cultural wisdom

## 1 Introduction

The opinion that has developed in traditional society is that the embedding of the words "Kyai" and "Ki" in the name of gamelan is no longer a secret, and in some places that seem exclusive this is a sign of cultural dynamics that are taken for granted. Adi Luhung's artistic concept of sacred art no doubt means that the existence of this art continues to resonate as something that has quite high value. Adi Luhung's concept of art, which can be interpreted as mahayuning janmo and mahayuning buwono, is not just jargon, but has a normative attachment to the lives of the people [1]. The word mahayuning which is more interpreted as 'prosperous', and the word janmo which means human, and the word buwono which means world, are normative references given to traditional arts with a number of benefits. In this way, Adi Luhung's sentence about art can be interpreted as art that has brought prosperity to humans and the world around them, not something that is made up. Gamelan art in several cultural areas is often considered a sacred art and is considered auspicious. Therefore, to give a unique title, many people add the words "Kyai" or "Ki" in front of it. It is not only possible to provide an identity that differentiates one gamelan ensemble from another, but there may also be different musical characteristics. In philosophical studies, each difference in character also corresponds to its designation, for example; Ki Handaru (one of the names of the gamelan ensemble owned by STSI and now ISBI Bandung) which shows that the sound of the gamelan is quite loud (handaru is another word booming) and can be heard everywhere. In fairly exclusive cultural

areas, you will find many ensemble names that include the word "Kyai" or "Ki", especially in Java Island.

In reality, the names of the gamelans that have been embedded in front of the word "Kyai" are gamelans from the two large palaces on the island of Java which are considered heirlooms that are treated and cared for specially. One of the special things is that every year (especially on Bulau Maulud) a jamasan (read: washing or bathing) is held using special water. This treatment is not only in the palace area which already has standard traditions, even in society (outside the palace) it also follows the same method. Apart from the name "Kyai" (specifically for gamelan in the palace), people outside the palace will also get it, some examples are as in the table below;

**Table 1.** The Names of Gamelan at Society

1.	Ki Muntili	Kedungsana - Cirebon
2.	Ki Handaru	STSI/ISBI Bandung
3.	Ki Mega Mendung	STSI/ISBI Bandsung

Source: [4] Suhendi Afryanto

The word "Ki" is an abbreviation of the term "Aki" which means someone who is old (old) and highly respected by the community. Like the gamelan Gong Rénténg Ki Muntili, where Ki Muntili is taken from the owner of the gamelan who is very famous in his area who is wise and wise [5]. Because of its special treatment, every year the gamelan (Gong Rénténg Ki Muntili) jamasan is performed with water mixed with seven types of flowers. Based on the opinions circulating in the surrounding community and their beliefs, it is possible why the gamelan must be bathed in flower water so that the gamelan will spread a fragrant fragrance throughout the world, just like the nature of fragrant flowers. However, on the other hand, there are also scientific studies that it is possible that the mixture of various types of flowers will have a positive effect as a substance (compound) that functions as an anti-toxin or anti-virus. Therefore, after being bathed or washed with the water of the seven kinds of flowers, to dry them they are smoked with incense smoke. As with the assumption about flower water, incense smoke, besides being fragrant, also has an anti-toxin effect too.

If you look at the facts above, how traditional (old) society treats the heritage art they have inherited over the years so well. Of course, this has its own reasons where the position of culture, both as culture and civilization, is well maintained. Views culture in the sense that culture is considered a configuration of values, principles and normative ideals that are always referred to in everyday life, culture can also be seen as civilization which consists of a collection of intellectual knowledge and technical means [6]. as a human effort to exercise control over nature and its environment. The second position of the definition of culture conveyed by Weber may be old values that are always maintained as a manifestation of how to care for roots (traditions) even though times continue to change and develop. Society that positions heritage art in a more normative scope is a sign that the spirit of tradition is still being carried out. If this phenomenon is considered unique, then the research that has been carried out tries to map the problem more openly, and will also be presented openly.

With the foundation as mentioned above, research that takes the topic of embedding the word "Kyai" or "Ki" in gamelan ensembles will open the curtain on what has been considered a myth that leads to a certain spiritual power. The reason that strengthens the dimension of spirituality is quite high in traditional art, cannot be separated from the use of creativity through views that prioritize philosophical thinking and juxtaposed it with human cognitive knowledge. Plato (t.t.) once mentioned that the issue of creativity is also often associated with mystical and

supernatural things. To this view, is somewhat contradictory, then he brings the creative process closer to modern psychological issues, namely the results of creativity which are considered extraordinary because they originate from cognitive processes and/or knowledge [9]. Basically, the issue of spirituality, which also has supernatural values, can be elaborated through a cognitive knowledge approach that is tested from time to time. That is the mystery of traditional art which presents an interesting story between the past and the present.

## **2 Research Methods**

Two approaches were taken in this research to capture what is meant by the phenomenon that is currently occurring as in the title above, namely using the life story method and personal narrative. From the view of the qualitative life story method, there are at least four steps that must be taken in carrying out a historical search, namely; (1) family data; (2) autobiographical data; (3) selection system, and (4) comprehensive observation results. Data about the family describes the relationship between economic, social and religious life. So, human life by nature cannot be avoided from the relationships that support themselves as homo economos, homo sociologos, and homo spiritual. Of course, these three material bases cannot be separated, so that describing data on the existence of a group (humans) can be identified through such steps. Data regarding autobiography will provide a mapping of the progress of humans and their families, including the psychological dimensions in which they live, grow and are raised in a cultural environment. Meanwhile, from a psychodynamic perspective, the human selection process is based on the family tree and its members which show characteristic differences, and for in-depth studies this can be done by making comprehensive or comprehensive observations. The life story approach will be effective if it is carried out continuously and involves oneself in the life of the object being studied [8].

Meanwhile, regarding the personal narrative method used, Fisher explained that individual story narratives are the most interesting stories in cultural analysis, especially those related to the nuances of new conversations about representation and diversity [4]. This is based on the reality that an individual's view of cultural phenomena cannot be separated from the connection between one individual and another, because culture is actually collective and communal [4, p63]. This method prioritizes how the resource person is allowed to tell the story as it is in line with his or her own experience. The principle is that revealing someone's best practices is much more valuable than written data that doesn't say much. In local discourse, talking ngalor-ngidul (read; going everywhere) is more interesting in order to arrive at the substance that is hoped for together. Again, these two methods are more effective for digging up some of the research information needed, especially reliable 'what people say'. Oral traditions in the form of oral tradition in traditional community life have dominated from the past until today. One of the veracity of the information tested is their experience as witnesses of life exceeding expectations, which is sometimes unexpected. The habit of traditional society is to be more comfortable with chatting to reveal the desired information, rather than being asked a number of very formalistic questions. So, through life stories and narrative personal data and information, embedding the word "Kyai" or "Ki" in the name of the gamelan ensemble makes its existence more trustworthy.

## 2.1 Theoretical Study

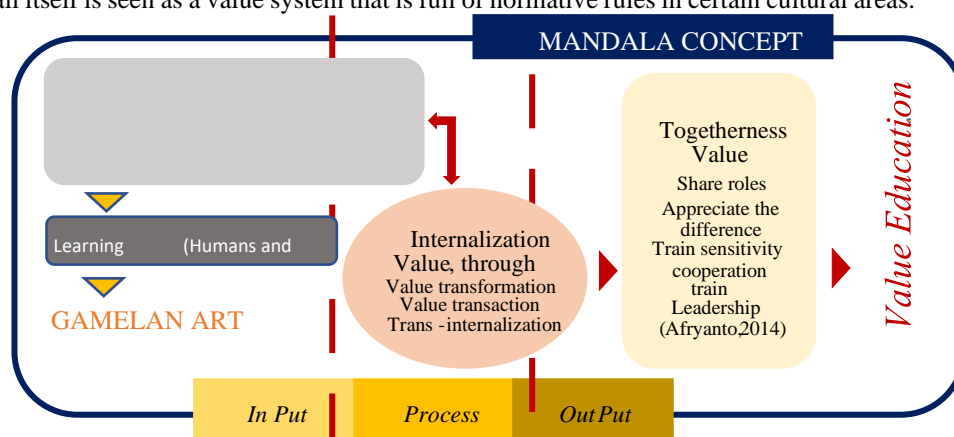
Borrowing Derrida's theory of deconstruction, which more specifically focuses its study on the world of literature in terms of text, is a little more possible than targeting theoretical propositions that are too far apart. The essence of deconstruction theory that will be borrowed is more about the issue of debating the reading process (cultural aspects) which can be in accordance with facts or not at all and tends to make things up. As stated by Norris [9, p7], the elements that are traced or re-read, and then dismantled, are not first of all logical inconsistencies, weak arguments, or inaccurate premises contained in the text, as is usually done by modernist thinking, but rather elements that are philosophically determining or elements that allow the text to be philosophical. Roughly speaking, it is the possibility of philosophy itself that is being questioned. Regarding this matter, Darmanto Yatman emphasized the assumption that for (certain) artists the creative process carried out and taking the form of works of art may not just be a mere artistic concept, but rather be philosophically identified with the philosophy of his life [10]. In fact, art and creative processes (artists) are the philosophy of a person's life, especially in traditional (old) societies. In fact, some people dominate the element of devotion throughout their lives through art, and without any excessive selfinterest other than self-existence. This perspective has shown a cycle, where for cultural servants (in certain environments) it can be due to the beliefs they hold to continue to grow within themselves. This is the crux of the problem, why embedding the words "Kyai" or "Ki" which cannot contain very conventional logic into something factual, is possible for certain groups where cultural texts are interpreted as beliefs related to the philosophy of their life. By juxtaposing myths and facts, the deconstruction theory approach which aims to find shortcomings, injustices, lies and other things that society does not want can be avoided. Analytically, deconstruction can be said to be a way of looking at texts to distort conventionalized meanings. Thus, the public's statement that the issue being discussed is between myth and fact, through a deconstruction theory approach, may be that it is a fact and not a myth. The complete research results will try to reveal everything described in the narrative above.

## 3 Research Result

Answering the question of whether the embedding of the words "Kyai" or "Ki" in the name of a gamelan ensemble that has been categorized as an heirloom is a myth or fact, will of course start by looking for an understanding of what "Kyai" is. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary Kyai is a word of greeting for alim ulama (clever scholars in the Islamic religion), or a word of greeting that begins the name of an object that is considered auspicious (weapons, gamelan, etc.) [11]. A similar understanding was also conveyed by Dhofier that the word Kyai or Kiai is a title of honor for items that are considered sacred; for example, "Kyai Garuda Kencana" is used to refer to the Golden Chariot in the Yogyakarta Palace, or a title of honor for elderly people in general [12 p55].

From some of the information obtained, the word "Kyai" or "Ki" is essentially a form of respect for humans or objects that have benefited human life. A person who is called "Kyai" or "Ki" is someone whose knowledge, experience and attitude are a source of reference for the benefit of society, and are even emulated as a good figure. Objects (such as gamelan) called "Kyai" or "Ki" are considered learning media that deserve respect, because from these objects all knowledge and skills will be obtained if they are studied. As an example, when the Sundanese

Karawitan art maestro Mang Koko (deceased) was still around, he was very angry if any of his students were seen directly by him stepping over the gamelan. The maestro will shout prohibitions with the sentence; "Pamali, don't step over the gamelan." The word pamali is a word with stigmatic nuances that should not be done, and if it is done there will be consequences, and pamali itself is seen as a value system that is full of normative rules in certain cultural areas.



**Figure 1.** Mandala Concept as a Learning Resource

Not only as a source of knowledge and skills, gamelan art also influences the formation of the learner's attitudes, considering that gamelan art as an ensemble art in principle teaches togetherness. For this reason, Afryanto views that gamelan art is actually a medium for character formation for its students. In the Mandala concept (borrowing a term from Jakob Sumardjo [14]), learning resources are actually already in the universe with all its dynamics [4]. There are resources (human and natural), learning media, and a learning process that inclusively provides a space that deserves respect. Closing this article, above we have presented an overview of the Mandala concept associated with gamelan art as a learning medium. Culture (one of the elements of art) is a tool that will be used by its owner.

### 3.1 Values of Respect in the Diachronic Dimension

Apart from explaining the etymology in Indonesian, lexically, the word "kiyai" was written by Jonathan Rigg in 1862 in his work entitled "A Dictionary of the Sundanese Language of Java". In his etymological explanation, Rigg explains the origin of the term "kiyai" which cannot be separated from the terms "ki" and "ki-ai". Ki described Rigg as: a sort of honorific designation placed before men's names or titles; also placed before the names of many plants or trees. in the first instance it is probably a contraction of Aki, grandfather, and in the latter of ka-i, which is sometimes though rarely heard for wood. before titles as Ki Tumunggun, Ki Demang- before proper names as Ki Jaman, Ki Saman [13]

Rigg's note above emphasizes the explanation of ki as an honorific term placed in front of a man's name or title; Rigg believes the term "ki" is a contraction of aki or grandfather. "ki" as a title, is given to highly respected figures, such as; Ki Tumugunggun, Ki Demang, Ki Saman etc. Rigg's (1862) diachronic explanation shows the strong relationship of the use of the term "ki" vis avis "kiyai" to highly respected personal figures. The intention of this respectful expression is coherent with the term "ki-ai" in Rigg's explanation, where he specifically explains

"ki-ai" as: a term of respect for an old man; a term of respect to designate a father in law. compounded of ki, a honorific designation, and aya father.

This explanation once again shows that the meaning of "ki" and "ki-ai" or "kiyai" always conveys respect for male figures.

## 4 Conclusion

The attribution of the name “ki” or “kiyai” is not just a naming to show identity, but through the attribution of the name is inherently embedded the values of respect for Gamelan both as tangible objects and intangible Gamelan systems. Egalitarian values, independence, in the Gamelan playing system through the naming of “ki” or “kiyai” not only demands the expression of the ability to play the gamelan, but also ethical values, character, and respect.

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