



Feminism in Song of *Jineman Kenya Ndesa Laras Slendro Pathet Sanga*

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ABSTRACT

Feminism in Sukeşi Rahayu's Jineman Kenya Ndesa laras slendro pathet sanga is a study that reviews feminist discourses on the creation of gamelan music based on the issues of gender equality between women and men. The purpose of this research is to prove and show that the creation of Javanese karawitan is not only based on male paradigm domination, but women also have a role in speaking out about feminism through karawitan works. The research methodology used is descriptive qualitative by positioning the object of study as the primary focus and writings on feminism as supporting sources. The results of this study indicate that in Sukeşi Rahayu's Jineman Kenya Ndesa Slendro Sanga, there is feminist content, namely an attempt to elevate the dignity of women, which in this case is sindhen, within the scope of Javanese art culture as well as women in general.

KEYWORDS

Feminism;
Sindhnan;
Javanese culture

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1. Introduction

Javanese culture is closely related to patriarchal issues (Mawaddah, Suyitno, and Suhita 2021), a cultural system that leads to things that place men as the center of power, politically, socially, and culturally (Hughes-Freeland 2021; Chiliza and Masuku 2020). This can be seen in the life pattern of Javanese society (Widyawati and Andalus 2020), which places men as the leader of anything (Masri 2021), both on a household scale that places a father figure as the leader of the family, or on a larger scale such as being the king of either a kingdom or a state in the past. It is undeniable that until the era of independence as it is today, this culture has continued to influence the system of people's lives in choosing a state leader, or positioning men in a larger order of life, even though, in fact, discourses on gender equality have long developed in Indonesia involving emancipation figures including RA Kartini. The influence of patriarchal culture is also still alive in traditional arts, such as *karawitan* and *sindhnan*. At *karawitan* concerts, either performing an independent show or supporting the atmosphere of *pakeliran* and dance, there are still many male performers, while women only occupy the position of *sindhnen* (the singers) or *ricikan gender* (one of the kinds of Gamelan musical instrument) although not many. Since the emergence of art institutions or centres of art studies, it is undeniable that women who study art education, especially traditional music, are also taught to play musical instruments (*ricikan*) of all kinds. Thus, women who study at art colleges are expectably capable of training other women to be skilful composers. Therefore, within the society, female musical groups currently have started to grow and exist among the other *Karawitan* musical groups in general.

The efforts of gender equality in the realm of Javanese culture (Sholikhah and Masrurroh 2019; Waluyo and Mustofa 2021), especially *Karawitan* musical art (Widyahening 2019), are certainly not easy. Many things eventually become obstacles, including the physical strength of women that are not as strong as that of men. In addition, there is a perspective that women are objects of visual exploitation only (Maharani 2019; Afifah, Rahma, and Cholis 2020), such as the *sindhnen* (*Karawitan* vocalists, mostly female) job, which sometimes is considered only as an entertainer. To view more deeply, the functions of *pesindhnen* (or *sindhnen*) who conveys tones and verses verbally is certainly not only as a



stage flower. But, through *sindhengan* text (cakepan), female vocalists in Javanese musical ensembles also have an educative mission like *dalang* (the puppeteer in Indonesian wayang story). This is following the word's origin, namely *Pasindhayan*, which means a woman who conveys innuendos to life through vocal processing (Rahayu 2018). Departing from this, finally, it comes to the reflection that apparently it is necessary to examine musical works related to the position of the *pesindhén* as morality educators through the poems and songs created. It is hoped that all the values and points of view contained in work will emerge and become a means of self-reflection for anyone who listens and reads.

The discussion of feminism in the creation of *Karawitan* musical art has not been widely carried out by previous writers, several studies or discussions about feminism in traditional *Karawitan*. Rudy Irawanto, in an article entitled "Women's Social Construction in Traditional Art's Feminism" stated that the position of women in Javanese traditional art is still tied to Javanese patriarchy, in which the normative cores contain advice for women, are still unequal to feminism values. Literary works that contain normative advice for Javanese women, such as *Serat Candrarini*, tend to put women in a cornered state; most of the contents of these literary works are; the concept of a woman's behaviour who must always obey without contradicting everything her husband does, even when the husband wants to do polygamy. The work that is used as the object of research is *Jineman Kenya Ndesa laras slendro pathet sanga* by Sukesri Rahayu. Based on the phenomena mentioned above and the selected research objects, two problem formulations emerged which eventually became the focus and novel of this research, namely: (1) What is the form of *Jineman Kenya Ndesa Laras Slendro pathet Sanga*, (2) How is the Feminism content in the text of *Jineman Kenya Ndesa*.

2. Method

To take a deeper look at the feminism discourses in *Jineman Kenya Ndesa Laras Slendro Pathet Sanga*, a descriptive qualitative research method was used to present the data and then analyze it according to research needs. The object of study as the primary focus and writings on feminism as supporting sources. Firstly, the analysis starts to discuss the description and direction of the *Jineman Kenya Ndesa* performance as part of *Jineman Kenya Ndesa Laras Slendro pathet Sanga* form. Secondly, the interpretation of feminism in the *Jineman Kenya Ndesa* verses was analyzed based on its content or message conveyed in the songs.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The form of *Jineman Kenya Ndesa Laras Slendro pathet Sanga*

Jineman is a particular *gendhing* (*Karawitan* musical composition) form. *Kenya ndesa* consists of two words in Javanese, namely *kenya* and *ndesa*. *Kenya* means a virgin or single woman who is growing and *maturing*, while *ndesa* or *desa* means a village, a place where the opposite of a city is, a small unit of government system usually led by a *lurah* (KBBi Online/Desa). *Kenya ndesa* literally means a single woman who is growing and maturing, who lives in a village, an area analogous to a place far from cities. *Kenya Desa* is a phrase for a simple country girl who is very unpretentious with her decent attitude. Meanwhile, a village as the best womb for life reflects a sincere, natural lifestyle, never does intentional behaviours for the public to see, but instead has a very strong image and a strongly attached character. The current trends of urbanization and modernity, which are widely discussed in the community, seem to build a social stigma that is not very good for the words "*nDesa*". *nDesa* or (village) seems to be the opposite of modern life, and the term is also known as an image for people with underdeveloped minds and left-behind. In fact, at this current time, *nDesa* or being *nDesa* is the only reflection of honesty because, in the village, everything goes as it is. Modernity, in reality, has come with so many deviations because it always dwells on the problems of non-Nusantaraist lifestyles and is always associated with foreign cultures that are not necessarily in accordance with national identity. The word *jineman* itself is the Javanese language which means any arrangement for sleeping (*Bausastra Jawa online/ Jinem*). Therefore, the nature of the *tembang* or



music played as *jineman* is subtle like lullabies. In detail, the description and direction of the *Jineman Kenya Ndesa* performance is as in Figure 1.

Buka celuk: 5 6 i i i, i i i i i 5 5 656...①
 Ka e a na ke nya ma nis tur mrak a ti
 Direction: Garap instrument, "specific">> (*kendhang, gender, slenthem, struktural*).
 . 2 . 1 . 2 . 1 . 1 1 . 5 3 2 ①
 (all ricikan jin.)
 . 5 .2 i . 5 .2 i .6 i 6 i . 5 3 5 25 1
 Sla ga ne pa cak e nga we a we ka ton ngujiwat e
 Direction: Continued, Garap instrument, "general" (*jineman instrument*)
 Bal: . 2 6 1 6 2 6 1 . 2 .
 6 . 2 . 5
 . 2 1 6 1 6 2 1 6 1 . . 26 6
 . 6 i 5
 Ci nan dra lir hap sa ri ha ngi der i
 Bal: . 5 i 6 i 5 3 ②
 . 2 2 . 2 3 6 5
 . . i 6 i 5 6 2 .2 2 i6 i 65 6
6i 5
 Ta man sa ri ha ngi der i ta man sa ri
 Andhegan: 5 6 i 23i, 5 5 3 3 2 21235 i65
3...②
 Ing panjangka da dya pu tri kang u ta ma
 Bal: . 5 2 . 5 i 5 6
 i 6 i 5 3 2 3 1
.5 3 5 2 .5 6 5 2 i 5i2 i 6 6 6 6i 5 3 21 23 1
 ing panjangka da dya putri kang u ta ma a ga we a rum ing bangsa
 Bal: 5 3 2 3 2 1 2 ①
5 6 5 3 2 56 3 2 5 3 1 6523 1
 gelang cecundhuk ngel mu o bor bu da ya a gung

Fig. 1. Description and direction of the *Jineman Kenya Ndesa* performance



3.2. Interpretation of Feminism in *Jineman Kenya nDesa Slendro Pathet Sanga*

Feminism comes from the Latin word *femmina*, which means woman. The word is then used in any other language of the world to refer to everything identical to women. For instance, in French, the word *femme* refers to women in terms of gender and *female* in English. The dichotomy between feminine and masculine is clearly distinguished, referring to the terms male and female, so that the term feminism is always synonymous with feminine traits. More broadly, feminism is defined as a social movement for the feminine (Simões, Amaral, and José Santos 2021; Kim 2020). In Indonesia, emancipation began to be promoted since the Repelita III movement, which was marked by the appointment of the State Minister for the Women Roles. The interpretation of feminism in the *Jineman Kenya Ndesa* verses can be seen from the content or message conveyed in the text, which the literal translation text of *the Jineman Kenya Ndesa* is as in Figure 2.

*(There is a beautiful and attractive woman,
Her demeanor is captivating, like teasing,
Like an angel circling the garden of heaven,
Aspires to be a main princess,
Bringing the fragrance of the land,
With a gelung (hair bun) on top of her head
and knowledge she brings to be a light for the nation's noble culture)*

Fig. 2. Literal translation text of *the Jineman Kenya Ndesa*

From the rough Indonesian translation, the lyrics describe an innocent woman from a village whose beauty is like an angel's from heaven. The beauty here does not mean what is observable by eyes, but the beauty which is on the inside, seen through character and behaviour. This depicts that true beauty comes from within or in the form of intelligence, which can make the country proud. Implicitly, this work refers to the figure of the *pesindhen* as a pillar of Javanese culture in carrying the cultural mission. The existence of the *sindhen* itself is associated with a *gelung*, that is, the hair bun on top of the head and given *cundhuk*, to bind. In this case, the word *cecundhuk* of knowledge means beauty that is bound with knowledge, as *sindhen* which must have the ability to convey the essential life values. As the morality for society. *Sindhen* is not only a stage flower that adorns the performance with makeup and lights, but *sindhen* also should have the same dignity as men with the knowledge she brings and spreads. This work also shows the role of women related to their *kithoh* / destiny role as mothers for life and the role of *pesindhen* in Javanese *Karawitan* musical ensembles, which are still closely related to patriarchal discourse. Thus, the role of *pesindhen* as conveyers of values can be fully interpreted and understood.

4. Conclusion

Jineman kenya nDesa is a work in the form of *jineman* with special work on a structural *ricikan* (instruments ensembles). The creation of *Jineman Kenya nDesa* was inspired by women's roles in Javanese cultural life, which has always been seen as *kanca wingking* (back-of-the-house companion), into a figure who becomes a light for Javanese culture with their knowledge. *Jineman Kenya nDesa* is a work of art that is grounded in the underlying paradigm of feminism both from the artist's point of view and the essence of the work.

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