THE PROCESS OF WAKIJA WARSAPANGRAWIT MUSICIANSHIP
(A Tracer To Provide A Model For Young Musicians)

Slamet Riyadi
Program Studi Seni Karawitan Jurusan Karawitan
Fakultas Seni Pertunjukan, Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Surakarta
enjang_ps86@yahoo.com

Abstract

This article traces the process through which Wakija Warsapangrawit developed as a musician, using social, psychological and historical approaches to reveal his excellent musicianship. The article begins with the social factors – family background, surrounding environment, and karawitan activities – that constituted his social life and played an important role in forming his personality and musicianship. Next, a psychological approach supports the connection between his self-motivation and ambitions to become a kendhang player. Lastly, a historical approach is used to give a brief description of the karawitan activities during his childhood where he is thought to have honed his musical skills.

Keywords: musicianship, social, motivation, karawitan activities.

Preface

The story of the career of Wakija Warsapangrawit as a gamelan musician and foremost as a kendhang player is essentially personal, social, and historical. Wakija Warsapangrawit as an individual has self motivation, he is part of a community, from the family, as the smallest unit, to the larger social milieu in which he lives. He has a historical background as well, as David Thomson says ‘Men to great extent do make their own history’ (1974:58). His musicianship constitutes as achievement he had reached. Therefore in order to provide an explanation the life story of Wakija Warsapangrawit, this research involves several literatures that have connection with the topic. These include psychology, sociology, and history.

It is evident that the life story of Wakija Warsapangrawit is multi-dimensional. Therefore, in order to expose his life story several approaches are needed, including a psychological, sociological, and historical approach. In this context, the social and historical aspects are interpreted as a unitary process, while psychological aspect is thought to be a separate fact. The analysis of these aspects begins with an observation of the family background as the smallest community, then continues with an explanation of the social and historical back-
ground. As has been mentioned above, the scope of this problem is broad. Therefore, in order to provide a sharp analysis, the discussion of this problem needs to be limited. This discussion includes a description of how Wakija Warsapangrawit began to learn *gamelan* music and develop his ability; the way he developed his ability must be examined in order to determine both its weaknesses and strengths; and the features of his drumming. These three variables have something to do with the social situation, especially in terms of the social aspect of *gamelan* music. In accordance with this, the discussion mainly exposes the *gamelan* music activities that Wakija Warsapangrawit has been involved in.

Wakija Warsapangrawit grew up in a neighborhood of *gamelan* musicians where there were many related performing arts activities. His father was an excellent guitarist and *kroncong*1 musician, and also sometimes played *gamelan* just for fun. When he was child, there were a lot of *gamelan* activities, e.g. practices and performances in his *kampung*. It seems that initially he began to become an accomplished *gamelan* musician through his appreciation and active participation in these activities. By considering these facts, this means he had a strong internal motivation to learn *gamelan* music both seriously and energetically. This phenomenon is in line with the concept of educational psychology developed by C.G. Jung. This cites that a child’s behavior is more or less identical to the behavior of his or her parents or people in the neighborhood where he or she lives. Since the collective unconscious domain of the child exists, some elements in the collective unconscious are fostered and nurtured by the child’s parents and/or neighborhood.5 In other words, the parents and neighborhood have an important role in shaping a child’s personality. This concept has been applied in order to expose the external influences in Wakija Warsapangrawit’s learning of *gamelan* music. Of course, it must also be remembered that co-existing with these external influences are Wakija Warsa-pangrawit’s personal motivations for playing this music, which cannot be underestimated. In this case I have tried to apply the intersection theory introduced by Amabile, which states that creative success is an intersection between a child’s domain skills, the skill to think and work creatively, and intrinsic motivation, or internal motivation (Utami Munandar, 2002:110).

According to the theory of convergence that was introduced by W. Stern, personality is formed by outside influences and inside gifts (Agus Sujanto, 1993: 211). It is also stated by H.C. Warpen, as quoted by Kartini Kartono, in the work *Teori Kepribadian*, that:

Personality is the entire mental organization of a human being at any stage of his development. It embraces every phrase of human character, intellect, temperament, skill, morality, and every attitude that has been built up in the course of one’s life (1980:11).

In this context, I have utilized Stern and H.C. Warpen’s theories to expose the development of Wakija’s personality and broadened it to include the competence of his musical development, since personality in terms of human intellect is believed to have a possible influence on musical developments.

In the realm of *gamelan* music, particularly in Solo, the name Wakija Warsapangrawit is very well known as a *pengendhang*. This statement is supported by the opinion of ethnomusicologist, Benjamin Brinner:

In this section, however, the kendhang was played by Wakidja, a widely recorded and emulated drummer who is also a fine *rebab* player. His knowledge of the piece clearly extends beyond the minimum necessary for his role, ... notably Tukinem, Wakidja, and Wahyapangrawit – are famous enough to serve as exemplars of it through recordings, broadcasts and live performance (Brinner,1995 : 15-16).

His *ciblon*7 drumming style has greatly influenced many of the younger and even the older drummers in and around Solo. This phenomenon is due in no small part to the extremely active role he has had in the record-
ing industry – to date playing kendhang on more than one hundred commercial cassettes. In 1955, he joined the dance company Dharma Budaya; furthermore he became well-known for his wayangan drumming as a result of regular performances with several famous dhalang such as Ki Warsina, Ki Gito Brayut, Ki Kasno, and Ki Anom Suroto. In the 1980s, he was in charge of a gamelan group known as Kridha Irama. Although in the past he has also played with several dancers and for performances of kethoprak, nowadays his work is largely focused in klenengan circles. These facts prove that his musicianship, particularly his drumming, is of an extremely high standard.

Through looking at the process of how his kendhangan has developed to such a high level of excellence without the benefit of a formal education, we can also draw some interesting conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses of musical education programs. We should not be surprised to find that most aspiring gamelan musicians are not given any lessons directly, and they have to find their own instruction while on the job or while performing in a tarub. In other words, these tarub experiences have fostered his musical maturity.

By the time he was in his third year at school, Wakija had begun to play kendhang to accompany several dances in the kampung. These dances were directed by the late Mulyono, who was also a director of the Paguyuban Masyarakat Surakarta (PMS) arts company. During this time he was also learning to play gamelan at school from the late Martosudirjo. As a child he had no particular desire to be a gamelan musician. What he felt at that time was a compulsion to be a kendhang player. For economic reasons, Wakija Warsapangrawit had to leave school for two years between 1951-1953.

As well as dance, there were often klenengan events in his kampung when he was growing up. These events gave him the opportunity to listen and observe how other people played the kendhang. Sometimes he sat down under the stage to enjoy the klenengan. When the klenengan was finished, he tried to play the kendhang patterns that he had just heard:

In fact in Jagalan there were very often klenengan [performances]... for every celebration there was a klenengan [performance]... I liked it very much ... sometimes I sat down under the stage ... when the klenengan was finished then [ I ] played gamelan myself, but I only liked playing a kendhang.

In this way Wakija Warsapangrawit taught himself the basic kendhang patterns for the lancaran which accompanies kiprahany:

I myself was astonished ... the drum players at that time were Pak Turahya, Pak Panuju, I listened, observed the drumming ... if I listened twice, sometimes once, I was able to imitate it. As a result of that, when I was working at RRI I played almost the same as Pak Panuju’s drumming.

Musical Experiences

By the time he was fifteen years old, he was already playing drum for wireng dance performances in several towns. He was also interested in dancing, so much so that he stopped playing kendhang for a while to concentrate on his dancing. He knew several wireng dances, such as female and male Tayungan, Handoko Bugis, and Anila Prahastho. Another dance style that he learnt was refined dance, such as Gambia anom and Rantaya. However he mostly performed Handoko - Bugis and Anila - Prahastho, since he was able to do the acrobatic movements used in these dances. He performed frequently as a dancer but eventually he tired of being cast as the same character:

After about a year of being cast as a Bugis [Handoko-Bugis dance] and as a Monkey [Anila-Prahastho dance], I got bored of it, ... the body is short, in addition the face is not handsome enough ...it would not be possible to become a role [dancer] ... [Eventually, I] returned to play kendhang again.

After he began playing kendhang again, he joined the arts company, Dharma Budaya.
This arts company, whose members were mostly Chinese, specialized in the performance of wayang orang. With this group, Wakija Warsapangrawit performed in East Java and Bali. To increase his skill on the kendhang, he also often attended kethoprak performances in Karangasem, Solo. Here, through a combination of observation and informal participation he learnt to play kendhang gambyong kethoprak:

Sometimes I watched kethoprak performances at Karangasem, [with a] kind of gambyong dance that used many gongan while waiting for the audience. So the drummer used many sekaran or patterns throughout the dance … I liked to imitate Pak Parji’s style. His drumming was very good for the kind of kemiden [such as kethoprak] style, and the very long gambyong dance.

The gambyong dance depicts young girls whose faces are heavily made up. On other occasions, Gambyong is performed by one or more dancers at events such as wedding parties or to welcome guests. It is the opening or prologue of a kethoprak drama or performance of wayang wong theatre, and is usually danced for a long time, while the audience gathers for the performance. There are, therefore, many dance patterns and the drummer must know many sekaran in order to accompany the dance.

Also at this time (1957) Wakija Warsapangrawit spent two months playing for wayang orang performances at Sriwedari in Solo. For a short time he also gained valuable experience playing with the army gamelan group in Salatiga:

In order to get more experience, I went to Salatiga to join with the army gamelan group … yes [it was] the URIL group … [I was] there for only three months, but [even then] I did not settle well because the temperature was very cold.

Wakija Warsapangrawit is largely self-taught, learning by listening to many different drummers and imitating the patterns he heard. In teaching himself, he eventually developed his own style. He began playing in wayang kulit performances with Warsina’s group in 1960. Warsina is the one of the oldest puppeteers in Surakarta. He is known as dalang kethèk [monkey], a specialist in the operation of the kethèk character.

After a year, in 1964 Wakija Warsapangrawit left this group to join the gamelan at the radio station in Solo (Radio Republik Indonesia, RRI). He was employed on a contract basis, renewable every two years. Initially, Wakija Warsapangrawit played saron, or saron peking, or sometimes gong with the group. However he now had the opportunity to listen closely to the playing of Panuju, the kendhang player with the RRI group. This was important for the development of Wakija Warsapangrawit’s drumming:

At that time I could not control my drumming, [I did not know] whether it was too loud or what. [I] began being able to control it [the drumming] while working at RRI … [I did this by] listening to Panuju’s playing … indeed I truly liked Panuju’s drumming very much … [it was] clear, … the sound up close was unclear, but on the radio and also on cassette recordings, it was excellent.

As well as Panuju and Parji, Wakija Warsapangrawit also admired the drumming of the late Sumardi who was a specialist klenengan drummer and Rono Sarman who was a specialist wireng drummer.

While working at RRI he also played kendhang for several young puppeteers. In his third year at RRI he was recruited as a drummer by one such young puppeteer, Ki Anom Suroto. Over time, Ki Anom Suroto became more and more famous. As a consequence, Wakija Warsapangrawit became much busier. On the one hand as the drummer of a famous puppeteer, he was the backbone of the group, while on the other hand the radio station also demanded his loyalty. This situation made it impossible for him to sustain his job at the radio station. One night Wakija Warsapangrawit was required to play for a wayang kulit performance with Ki Anom Suroto, and at the same time an important live concert performance at RRI. Wakija Warsapangrawit had already received two warnings from RRI, since he had
been absent several times. He knew the risk involved, but under pressure from Ki Anom Suroto and also Anom Suroto’s family, he decided to play in the wayang kulit performance. His contract with RRI was terminated the following day. After that Wakija Warsapangrawit devoted his time to Ki Anom Suroto and several other puppeteers who asked him occasionally whenever he was not playing for Ki Anom Suroto. In addition, he was asked to play kendhang for numerous dance performances, kethoprak performances, and sometimes klenengan. After eleven years Wakija decided to leave Ki Anom Suroto’s group. For a year after this he did not work at all. The young puppeteers were reluctant to employ him because they presumed that after his association with Ki Anom Suroto he would be too expensive. During this period he did not play for klenengan either:

[I did] nothing for a year … but no-one dared to ask [me to perform] … neither did the low puppeteers, [They] did not dare to ask … I was finished … even for klenengan performances. There were nothing left in the house [that could be sold], I was absolutely distressed.29

Sometime during this period, Wakija Warsapangrawit sought the advice of his former ‘teacher’ Warsina whom he held in high esteem30. According to Wakija Warsapangrawit this meeting resulted in a change in his fortune:

I had been advised before by Pak Warsina when I was playing wayang kulit [with him] … ‘if you want to get a happy life, go out at midnight, then after midnight on Thursday take a shower, and then pray to the God, hoping for enlightenment’.31

After this Pak Wakija Warsapangrawit continued to work at RRI until his retirement in 1995.

While he has never held a permanent position as a musician at the Kraton Kasunanan of Surakarta or the Mangkunegaran, he has often performed, especially at the Kraton Kasunanan at broadcast events and other special occasions. In 1986 he traveled to Europe to play kendhang with the Kraton Kasunanan gamelan in a program of traditional dances. In 1988 he was honored by the Kraton Kasunanan with the name RL. Warsapangrawit. On one occasion he was invited to become a permanent member of the Mangkunegaran gamelan group, but he did not accept the offer. He chose, rather, to devote his time to teaching his foreign students, most of whom come from Japan.

This biographical study intends to trace the entire life story of Wakija Warsapangrawit, beginning from his childhood through to adulthood, which means involving a social and historical approach. As the subject of the study is a human being, the involvement of a psychological approach is not avoided. This approach focuses in particular on aspects of internal motivation. It also involves a social approach, as Wakija Warsapangrawit is a part of a community, and the use of a historical approach is considered important so that the scope of the study covers both past events and more recent activities. In this context, this means that from genealogical standpoint he has inherited his musical talent from his father. As there is a common belief that talent is heredity, in this context he acquired his skill easily. This fact coincides with the economical difficulties of his family, which meant that his formal education did not run smoothly. He left school for two years, from 1951-1953, which meant he had a wider chance to devote his time to achieving his goal - to become a kendhang player. The social and historical aspects are interpreted as a unitary process, while the psychological side is considered to be a separate aspect. Allan Nevins states:

A good biography must also present a complete, accurate, and unbiased an account of the deeds and experiences of its subject as can be executed; provided, of course, that the completeness does not extend to impertinent and tiresome detail (1962:357).32

**Learning Period**

The analysis begins with the family background as the smallest community, then continues with an explanation of his cultural and sociological background. Psychologists have
found that the attitudes and values of parents are closely related to a child’s creativity. The combination of field research and laboratory research in creativity, together with a number of psychological theories, shows how parents’ attitudes directly influence a child’s creativity. (S.C. Utami Munandar, 1989: 103) Wakija Warsapangrawit grew up in a family of artists, as his father was a kroncong musician and also played karawitan occasionally. This situation on the one hand was a disadvantage in terms of his formal education, while on the other hand it was an advantage in terms of developing his musicianship.

By considering the statement above, it might be assumed that Wakija Warsapangrawit’s opportunity to become a musician was supported by several variables, as follows: Firstly, he received an inside gift from his parents, as his father was a kroncong musician and an amateur gamelan musician. Secondly, his parents supported him by allowing him the widest chance to develop his good talent in karawitan. Thirdly, there were a lot of karawitan activities in his kampung. This means that his process of self-actualization ran smoothly, and the talent he inherited was properly developed.

The strength of Wakija Warsapangrawit’s talent in karawitan is also supported by the fact that he was able to play drum to accompany dance when he was about ten years old. He learnt drumming patterns very quickly. If he listened twice, sometimes once, he was able to imitate the patterns. He was impressed by Panuju’s drumming style, therefore he was able to imitate Panuju’s style when he worked at the radio station (RRI). This is consistent with the idea that talent as a disposition is hereditary, which is stated by W. Stern as follows:

Personality is formed by outside influences and inside gifts. The talent as disposition is heredity, it constitutes acquisition that is brought since one come into being. It needs to be woken up, exercised, and developed. Whenever it gets an appropriate touch from outer, it will arise a strong curious to learn, furthermore, is established a tends in science, art, and another truth (Agus Sujanto, 1993: 211).33

Wahyapangrawit, who knew him since the 1950s, states that he was surprised by how the young boy -Wakija Warsapangrawit- played drum in a klenengan performance. In connection with this, it is appropriate to quote from Benjamin Brinner in Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese gamelan and the theory of musical competence and interaction as below.

An early start on the acquisition of musical competence is both common and advantageous, although there are some good musicians who have managed to overcome the disadvantage of starting late. Sutton has described a case in which the son of a leading musician and teacher showed no overt interest in gamelan until his mid-teens, at which point he acquired a high degree of well-rounded competence with astonishing rapidly (1991b), indicating that extensive exposure offers an important passive basis on which active competence can be rapidly built (1995:134).

From a social point of view, it can be said that his neighbourhood, in kampung Jagalan held many karawitan activities while he was growing up. These events gave him the opportunity to listen to and observe how people played kendhang. Sometimes he sat down under the stage to enjoy the klenengan. He says as below:

Sometimes I sat down under the stage … I liked it very much, I listened to the klenengan. At the other places I observed some kendhang players, when the klenengan was finished then [ I ] played [drum] myself. Formerly [ I ] only tried without patterns, then later on [ I ] could play [properly].34

It can be said that in order to become an aspiring gamelan musician, he had to be self-motivated, and be able to rely on his powers of observation. Furthermore, he also needed to rely on his own ears to learn the musical details of performance practice. During this time he was also learning to play gamelan at school from the late Martosudirjo. Here a Jap-
Japanese jogging exercise (taiso) was accompanied by gamelan. As a child he had no particular desire to be a gamelan musician. What he felt at that time was a compulsion to be a kendang player.

By regularly attending performances, Wakija Warsapangrawit ear becomes sensitive to the sound and tuning of the gamelan. He will master several simple piece that are played repeatedly. He learnt to play through three ways: (a) watching, (b) listening, and (c) imitating. In accordance with this, Wayne A. Wickelgren states as below:

Repeated presentation of a single stimulus may produce a habituation, which in a reduction in the probability of a reaction to the stimulus. Repeated presentation of other kinds of stimuli may excite the organism and so increase the amplitude or the probability of a reaction to a subsequent occurrence of the same stimulus or to wide range other stimuli. This process is called sensitization. Habituation and sensitization are example of single contingency learning in that they depend or are contingent upon the occurrence of single events (1977:24).

This also includes the existence of the Dharma Budhaya dance company and, Perkumpulan Masyarakat Surakarta (PMS) dance company. The members of these art companies were usually all Chinese, and Wakija Warsapangrawit took part as a member in both places, one of which (the Perkumpulan Masyarakat Surakarta dance company) still exists today. Since the late nineteenth century some Chinese Indonesians have not only devoted their time to develop their expertise as businessman, they also love Javanese gamelan music and dance. Kunst mentions that the best gamelans were in the possession of wealthy Chinese music lovers (Sumarsam, 1992:169). As evidence, the head of the local Chinese community, called Babah Ting, owned a good gamelan which later on was delivered to His majesty Paku Buwana IX, namely Kyai Kaduk Manis (a slendro gamelan), and Manis Rengga (a pelog gamelan). Other evidence includes the birth of the commercial troupe of wayang wong and its musicians, which is a case in point.

Period of Developing Maturity and Competence

In 1956 when he joined the Dharma Budhaya dance company, he was cast as the kendhang player. Again, here he also had a great chance to develop his competence in playing kendhang. With this dance company, he performed in several towns in East Java and Bali. Only one year later, he tried to become a musician for wayang orang performances at Sriwedari for several months. Here Wakija Warsapangrawit had a bad experience that he would not forget for the rest of his life, as he says:

On the second day when I started working at Sriwedari, Harjo Kutuk [the senior rebab and kendhang player] deliberately ‘tested’ him by playing an introduction to gendhing Bontit, [pelog nem]. I did not know the piece, but had heard it before, I knew the way it is played, but the Dah, dung of this piece was not right. Even though I broke out in a cold sweat, I managed to pass this ‘test’ by ending the piece properly. At that time I was ashamed.

At that time when there were few or no public sources for knowledge about gamelan music, and access to musical information was very difficult. This period was coloured by an odd habit of most of musicians, which they called ‘testing’ among themselves. For instance, a rebab player could ‘test’ a drummer’s expertise by playing an introduction to a certain strange piece, such as Jongmeru Bahgong. If the drummer played a normal drum pattern, he failed the ‘test’, which showed his limitations. On another occasion, a drummer might ‘test’ a female singer’s (pesinden) expertise by playing an unusual pause (mandeg) in a certain piece, in which situation she should be able to respond by continuing the piece, otherwise she would fail the ‘test’. It is true that sometimes in an informal klenengan situation, someone tries to ‘cause a rift’ between the musicians. For instance, the bonang player performs the introduction to the piece Tedaksaking, but
plays it one key lower than usual. If the other instruments who join in on the gong play the proper note, it will be too high. Another example is that the kendhang player who is not harmony with the male singers would play irama rangkep in the singing section. This habit on the one hand gives a stimulus to musicians to learn more and more musical details, but on the other hand it may result in a bad performance.

During his spare time in the same year, Wakija also attended kethoprak performances in Karangasem to widen his experience of kendhangan gambyong kethoprak. When he was twenty years old, he began playing kendhang for wayang kulit performances with Warsina’s group for several years. In this period, he develops another kind of kendhangan, eg. for wayangan style. In 1964 he worked as a musician at the Radio Station (RRI) of Surakarta on a contract basis. With this group, he did not play kendhang, but he played saron, or mostly he played gong. Therefore, he had more chance to observe the kendhangan of the late Panuju. Concerning this matter Benjamin Brinner in Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese gamelan and the theory of musical competence and interaction states that:

The proper placement of the colotomic kenong, kethuk, kempul, or gong strokes can be deduced from the form of a piece and passive knowledge of the corresponding cyclical drum patterns. The musician then has time to absorb the melody from other musicians because the colotomic parts move slowly in most pieces (1995:137).

During this time he also performed as the drummer for several young puppeteers. One of these young puppeteer, Ki Anom Suroto recruited him as a permanent member, and also cast him as drummer. Initially, Ki Anom Suroto performed wayang kulit in the day time, since as a young puppeteer he did not get the orders that his father did. Later on, Ki Anom Suroto got his own jobs, mostly in the rural areas around Klaten, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, and Wonogiri, later travelling further a field to Ngawi and Madiun (East Java). In addition to doing many wayang kulit performances with this puppeteer, he also made recordings for about five stories, each of which is made up of eight cassettes. During the time with Ki Anom Suroto, he was sometimes also asked to perform for klenengan, dance performances, or even wayang kulit performances with another puppeteer. Finally, he worked as a musician at the radio station (RRI) where he was later cast as kendhang player with this group.

The explanation above shows that Wakija Warsapangrawit began being interested in playing kendhang since his childhood. It can be presumed that he had a great curiosity regarding playing kendhang. The curiosity he had was supported by a good talent, which meant that he could learn relatively quickly, as he asserts below:

I myself was astonished … I never studied with [anybody]… just listened [I] could play. [The] kendang players at that time were Pak Turahya, Pak Panuju. I listened, observed the drumming … if I listened to for twice, sometimes once, I was able to imitate it. As a result of that, when I was [working] at the Radio Station [RRI] I played almost the same as Pak Panuju’s drumming.

He observed live performances, played kendhang for different kinds of performing arts in order to increase and mature his musicianship, particularly his drumming. He also tried to expand his repertoire of pieces, and experiment with new ways to interpret pieces. Clearly, Wakija Warsapangrawit has adventured for a relatively long time in Javanese performing arts activities, e.g. wireng dance, gambyong kethoprak, wayang kulit, wayang orang, and klenengan. Apart from this, he has also made some cassette recordings for wayang kulit performances and klenengan. These experiences are facts which prove to us how Wakija Warsapangrawit has matured as musician and as a human being. It is not wrong to assert that Wakija Warsapangrawit has developed most of his musicianship on the job.

To expose the superiority of Wakija Warsapangrawit’s drumming, is to speak
from aesthetic point of view. The aesthetics of drumming in Javanese gamelan music can be examined through three aspects, namely laya, kebukan, and wiledan. This section will examine the superiority of Wakija’s drumming through these aspects. Furthermore, the excellent drumming is also supported by his ability in interpreting the character of a piece performed. The following is a detailed analysis of the drumming.

A good command of laya is an important aspect of drumming, as in a performance there are different kinds of laya for each section of a piece. For example the laya of the merong section is different from that of the inggah; the merong section should be slightly slower. In the researcher’s observation, Wakija Warsapangrawit has an excellent command of laya. He keeps a consistent tempo, and whenever he plays transition from one section to another, in which usually most of the instruments change gear, it feels smooth. He has the skill to apply the proper tempo to the character of a piece.

The quality of his kebukan is consistent. He is able to produce sounds of the ‘same’ quality through the piece. The volume of each sound is in balance. In addition, the articulation of the sounds is clear (wijang). Therefore his quality of the kebukan is said to be pulen by his peers, which literally means good taste. In connection with this matter, Darsono expresses that Wakija’s kebukan is tèmbel, which means clear and full power.

It is true that Wakija Warsapangrawit is rich of variations in wiledan kendhangan. It is accepted as he has broad experience in the Javanese performing arts. He began from playing kendhang for dance, kethoprak, wayang orang, wayang kulit, and klenengan performances. His wiledan kendhangan is also supported by his ability to connect each part of sekaran to another, which makes them feel ‘pliket’, it means blended.

The other musicians who perform with him generally feel comfortable which therefore raises their spirit to maximize the nuance of the piece performed. It has also been supported by his active observation of several previous good drummers such as Martosudirja, Sumardi, Rono Sarman, Parji, Panuju Atmosunarto, and Turahyo. Another important capability he has is sensitivity in interpreting the character of pieces performed, such as calm, cheerful, humorous, energetic, sad etc. Finally, It is proper to say that he has an ability in commanding and organizing pieces to make them vividly and perfectly performed.

Conclusion

In order to expose Wakija Warsa-pangrawit as a whole, this article has involved social, historical, and psychological approaches. According to the collected data, one knows that his social milieu, namely his family, neighborhood, and karawitan community activities have indirectly encouraged him to develop his excellent talent in playing Javanese kendhang. For economic reasons, he left school for two years; this allowed him to improve his musical nuance and his father let him join Dharma Budaya and PMS art groups. In addition, in the next kampung to where he lived there were frequent klenengan rehearsals and performances. From the psychological side it can be set forth that it has also been supported by his self-motivation, such as direct observation to live klenengan and other arts performances, individual learning, and joining several gamelan groups. It can be said that in order to become an aspiring gamelan musician, he had to be self-motivated, and be able to rely on his powers of observation. Furthermore, he also needed to rely on his own ears to learn the musical details of performance practice. By considering these facts, this means he had a strong internal motivation to learn gamelan music both seriously and energetically. According to the theory of convergence that was introduced by W. Stern, personality is formed by outside influences and inside gifts. In this context, I have utilized Stern and H.C. Warpen’s theories to expose the development of Wakija’s personality and broadened it to include the competence of his musical development. In other words, the parents and neighborhood have an important role
in shaping a child’s personality. This concept has been applied in order to expose the external influences in Wakija Warsapangrawit’s learning of gamelan music. Of course, it must also be remembered that co-existing with these external influences are Wakija Warsapangrawit’s personal motivations for playing this music, which cannot be underestimated.

In short, he had undergone a wandering process to become an aspiring Javanese musician. Furthermore, his excellent drumming is supported by his realization of proper tempo, a consistent and balanced touch (*kebukan*), and the richness of his variations, as well as a capability in organizing and making the piece vividly and perfectly performed. Clearly, Wakija Warsapangrawit has adventured for a relatively long time in Javanese performing arts activities, e.g. *wireng* dance, *gambyong* *kethoprak*, *wayang kulit*, *wayang orang*, and *klenengan*. Apart from this, he has also made some cassette recordings for *wayang kulit* performances and *klenengan*. These experiences are facts which prove to us how Wakija Warsapangrawit has matured as musician and as a human being.

(Endnotes)

1 The name that was attributed by Paku Buwana XII in 1986. The attribute ‘*pangrawit*’ is normally given to a high rank musician in the court of Surakarta.

2 Javanese term for drum. In gamelan music, there are four types of *kendhang* used depending on the performance context.

3 *Kroncong* is a genre of Indonesian music which is based on the diatonic scale and sung in Indonesian. This music is a synthesis of Portuguese and Malay-Indonesian musical styles resulting from the cultural interaction between Portugal and Indonesia during the colonial era. A regional variant of *kroncong* developed in Central Java and is known as *langgam kroncong*. This *langgam kercong*, or *langgam java*, is sung in Javanese and uses pentatonic scales similar to the *slendro* and *pelog* scales of the *gamelan*. *Langgam kroncong*, therefore, may be played on the *gamelan*.

4 A *kampung* is the smallest unit of the formal Indonesian political area. It is usually inhabited by about 80-100 families.


6 *Kendang* (drum) player.

7 Medium sized *kendhang*, mostly used to accompany dance and livelier sections of concert gamelan music.

8 *Kethoprak* is a form of traditional Javanese drama or theatre. The stories are usually set in the era of the old Javanese kingdoms or taken from the *Menak* epic.

9 A *tarub* is a temporary structure erected for weddings and other events. This is the place where the gamelan is usually situated to play for the wedding or other event.

10 A *kampung* is the smallest unit of the formal Indonesian political area. It is usually inhabited by about 80-100 families.

11 A social organisation for the Chinese Indonesians in Salé (Surakarta). This organization was established in 1932, with the formal name *Chuan Min Kung Hui* (CKMH). Since 1959 the name changed to *Perkumpulan Masyarakat Surakarta* (PMS). See Rustapa in “Menjadi Jawa” (2007;73).

12 *Klenengan* is a gamelan music performance which is not used to accompany any other related arts. In the Javanese traditional community *klenengan* is played when celebrating a wedding ceremony, circumcision, or on other occasions.

13 In refined Javanese:

Dasaripun wonten Jagalan menika asring sanget sanget ... uger tiyang gadhah damel klenengan ... kula remen sanget ... sok wonten ngor strag' ... nek wis rampung terus tabuhan dhewe, ning sing kula senengi ngendhang.

14 *Lancaran* is the simplest form of *gamelan* music, consisting of sixteen beats per cycle.

15 *Kiprahan* is a section of dance. During the *kiprahan* one of the principle characters is having make up put on his face because he is falling in love with a woman. The music which ac-
companies the kiprahan dance section is usually in either lancaran or ladrang form.

16 In refined Javanese:

Kula piyambak menika ngantos nggumun ... ing-kang ngendhangi kala rumiyin ingkang kathah Pak Turahya, Pak Panuju, kula sok mirengaken, ngertos ... sока sok mirengaken ping kalih sok ping setunggal sampun saget nirokaken. Ngantos kula menika nalika taksih wonten RRI kendangan kula mèh persis Pak Panuju.

17 The wireng dance is based on an episode taken from the Ramayana, Mahabarata, or Panji epics. Usually the dance is either heroic or romantic in character.

18 In colloquial Javanese: Bola-bali mung dadi [penari] Bugis dadi [penari] kethet terus dangu-dangu jeleh kula, kira-kira setahun ... pawukane cendhek kurang dedeg tur rupean ora pati bagus ... ora mungkin dadi penari rol ... [kula] wangssl ngendhang malih.

19 Wayang orang is a genre of dance drama in which the characters are played by people (orang) as opposed to the leather (kulit) puppets in the wayang kulit.

20 Kethoprak is a form of traditional Javanese drama or theatre. The stories are usually set in the era of the old Javanese kingdoms or taken from the Menak epic.

21 Gong cycle made up of a specific number of beats depending on the type of piece being played.

22 In refined Javanese:


23 It is about 20-30 minutes long, while a normal gambyong performance lasts only 7-10 minutes.

24 Sriwedari is the location of the purpose-built wayang orang theatre in Solo (Surakarta).

25 In refined Javanese:

Supados kathah pengalaman, lajeng dateng salati-

26 Wayang kulit is a Javanese shadow play which uses leather puppets operated by a puppeteer who also narrates the story, sings, and conducts the gamelan accompaniment.

27 In refined Javanese:

Kala rumiyin kendangan kula nggih dereng saged nata, mbug kebanteren mbuh pijê. Saged nata meni-mi sakplokipun wonten RRI ... mirengaken kendhanganipun Pak Panuju ... tur puni-raos kula menika temen sanget kaliyan kendhanganipun Pak Panuju ... cetha, ... ketingalipun wonten ngrikun boten cetha, ning wonten radio menika saé sanget utawi wonten rekaman menika.

28 Darsono cites that in 1953 at Kampung Sewu (the kampung next to Jagalan) there emerged a karawitan group which was led by Sumardi. During this time, the rehearsals were attended by several musicians from the Karaton of Surakarta. These contacts were able to increase the musical quality of the group. Wakiija Warsapanggrawit was the one of the young musicians who participated in this group (Darsono, 1999: 36).

29 In refined Javanese:

Pet setahun ... mangka wong jaba ora wani nge-jak ... dadi dalang sanes sing asor-asor boten wani ngejak ... kula pun mati ... klenengan-klenengan nggih pun mati. Napa-napa ngomah nggih sampun telas, kula nganti nggrantes sanget.

30 Warsina is considered by many Javanese to have special powers. Wakiija related the following story as below:

One day when he performed a wayang kulit performance suddenly the logs [where normally the puppets are put] became completely hard for about a quarter of an hour. I saw it with my own eyes. During the Cakil battle scene an arrow was thrown which penetrated the screen stand. [Warsina declared : ’Anybody who is able to take off the arrow will receive my honor and I will also add some money.’ Nobody dared.

In my opinion, this is proof of the high esteem (çakti) in which Warsina was held.

In refined Javanese:
Sampun naté mayang debogé ditancepi boten tedhas, kinten-kinten seprapat jam. Kula ngertos piyambak. Pas perang Cakil panah niku kaya diuncalké ngoten saged temancep nggen cagak kelir. [Warsina ngendika :]

In colloquial Javanese:
'Sapa sing bisa njupuk panahku sesuk tak bayar opahku karo tak tambahi dhuwit.' Ora ana sing wani.

31 In refined Javanese:
Sakdérèngé niku sok dikandhani Pak Warsina nèk pas mayang ngoten niku ... 'nèk kowé kepingin urip kepénak, nèk tengah wengi metua, mengko nèk malem jemuah adus, terus nyenyewun karo sing gave urip, supaya entuk pepadang'.

32 Quoted by Tubagus Mulyadi, in his thesis “Gugum Gumbira”.


34 In refined Javanese:
Kula sok lungguh wonten ngesor tratag... kula re- men sanget, ngrungokne klenengan. Wonten pang-genan sanes sok nonton wong ngedhing, nek wis rampung terus tabuhan dewe. Wiwitane namung waton ngebuk, dangu-dangu saged piyambak.

35 The former name was Chuan Min Kung Hui (CMKH). Initially, this organization aimed its focus on the funeral activities of its own members, and also on helping members of the poor communities.

36 This is a colloquial language of Javanese musician in speaking drum syllable.

37 In refined Javanese:
Lagi mlebu rong dina mawon sampun dipakani gendhing kalih Pak Harja Kutuk, Ngrebab buka gendhing Bontit ngoten, kula dereng ngerti nota- sine, ning kula sampun nate mireng, lampahipun sampun ngertos, nadyan dah, dinge sing nggen gendhing kurang pas. Nganti gembrobjos kula, ning saget suwuk... Wahi isin kula.

38 The drummer should respond to the introduction of this piece with an irregular pattern.

39 Usually this piece is played in the pelog barang scale. If it were played one note lower e.g. in the pelog lima scale, the shape of the melo-


Sumarsam. Historical Contexts and Theories of Javanese Music. Cornell University, 1992