

Cultural Semiotics Analysis of Traditional Bantengan Art: Exploring Function, Symbolic Meaning, Moral Significance, and Existence

Sawitri¹, Ummul Khasanah², Ishak Bagea³, Ria Kristia Fatmasari⁴, Pande Wayan Renawati⁵

Universitas Veteran Bangun Nusantara Sukoharjo, Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendari, STKIP PGRI Bangkalan, Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti
Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar

Email: sawitriagusmariyadi@gmail.com, umulkhasanah@untag-sby.ac.id,
ishakbagea41@gmail.co.id, riakristiafatmasari@stkipgri-bkl.ac.id, riakristiafatmasari@stkipgri-
bkl.ac.id

Published: 30/04/2024

How to cite (in APA style):

Khasanah, S. U., Bagea, I., Fatmasari, R. K., & Renawati, P. W. (2024). Cultural Semiotics Analysis of Traditional Bantengan Art: Exploring Function, Symbolic Meaning, Moral Significance, and Existence. *Retorika: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 10(1), 101-112. DOI: <http://10.55637/jr.10.1.9336.101-112>

Abstract- This research aims to examine the functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and enduring presence of traditional Bantengan art from Indonesia through the lens of cultural semiotics. Employing participatory observation as the primary methodological approach, this qualitative study engages with diverse stakeholders, including religious figures, elders, artists, cultural experts, and local communities from Mojokerto and Malang. Through meticulous observation, recording, note-taking, and interviews, the research delves into the adaptation and evolution of Bantengan art amidst the socio-political and economic dynamics of globalization. The findings highlight the multifaceted nature of Bantengan art, emphasizing its role in fostering courage, solidarity, and resilience against colonial oppression. Despite the passage of time, Bantengan art continues to endure in the cities of Malang and Mojokerto, serving as a testament to its cultural significance and continuity. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of traditional art forms, providing insights into their historical relevance and contemporary vitality within Indonesian culture.

Keywords: Cultural Semiotics Analysis, Existence and Moral Significance, Function and Symbolic Meaning

I. INTRODUCTION

The traditional art of Bantengan is not only a rich cultural heritage laden with meanings and symbolism but also reflects the richness and complexity of society. Combining various art forms such as pencak silat, Bantengan dance, and jaranan, Bantengan enriches not only the visual experience but also creates a dynamic audio atmosphere through the use of musical instruments, ensuring that the audience remains

entertained and engaged throughout the performance (Jonathan et al., 2012); (Faris et al., 2017); (Anam et al., 2019); (NEGORO & Rizal A, 2020); (Afifah & Irawan, 2021); & (Asri et al., 2023). Bantengan art is not just an inseparable element of East Java's cultural heritage but also a source of profound symbolic wealth and moral significance. As an integral part of Javanese cultural heritage, Bantengan plays a crucial role in strengthening cultural identity and preserving

traditional values within society. Therefore, as a distinctive art form of East Java, particularly in the regions of Mojokerto and Malang, traditional Bantengan art offers an intriguing foundation for cultural semiotics analysis.

The art of Bantengan in the Mojokerto and Malang regions encompasses performances of dance, music, and dramatizations of local stories (Qonitati); (Desprianto, 2013); (Umbar, 2015); and (Fadeli et al., 2023). In this art form, a group of performers often dons masks and traditional costumes, dancing and playing music with traditional instruments such as kendang, saron, and demung. Bantengan art performances typically occur within various activities, such as religious ceremonies, cultural festivals, celebrations, or traditional ceremonies (Radhia, 2019). Bantengan art serves not only as entertainment but also as a means to convey moral messages, reinforce cultural identity, and promote local cultural heritage.

In the art of Bantengan, there are various functions, symbolic meanings, and moral significances embedded in its performances. Therefore, cultural semiotics analysis becomes a highly relevant approach to delve into the complexity, functions, symbolic meanings, and moral significances hidden within these Bantengan art performances. Additionally, researchers also explore the existence of traditional Bantengan art in this era of globalization. Bantengan is a form of traditional art rich in symbols and values passed down from generation to generation in East Javanese society. One of the main symbols that always emerges in these performances is the bull, as it symbolizes strength, courage, and power. The appearance of the bull in this art is often depicted with a majestic and powerful stance, reflecting masculine values and courage. The movements performed by the Bantengan dancers also contain specific symbols that refer to aspects of life and bravery. Besides the bull symbol, Bantengan art also encompasses various other symbols representing life and the values of East Javanese society. For example, the colors used in the costumes and dancer's attributes often carry specific meanings in the context of Javanese culture. The dance movements and accompanying music also contain symbols that communicate specific messages to the audience.

Beneath the surface of its captivating visual appeal, the traditional art of Bantengan in East Java carries profound moral messages. Themes

of courage, solidarity, and sacrifice are often woven into Bantengan performances, conveyed through storytelling and the choreographed movements of the dancers. This underscores the cultural richness and values deeply cherished by the people of East Java. Cultural semiotics analysis of Bantengan art not only unveils the embedded symbols but also illuminates the moral fabric of East Javanese society. It serves as a medium for delivering moral lessons, fortifying cultural identity, and articulating the community's core values. Exploring traditional Bantengan art through cultural semiotics provides profound insights into the intricate interplay of symbols, gestures, music, and costumes. From the majestic symbolism of the Banteng to the structured dance sequences, Bantengan art forms a nuanced and layered symbolic landscape. Understanding the functions and moral significance of Bantengan art enables society to honor the cultural legacy passed down through generations, fostering a deeper appreciation for its enduring significance.

Through exploring the existence of traditional Bantengan art in the era of globalization and modern technology, this research aims to investigate the adaptation of Bantengan art amidst the changing times. Cultural semiotics analysis not only deciphers symbolic codes but also opens a window for a deeper understanding of the cultural complexity and morality embedded within this traditional art form. Thus, cultural semiotics analysis will reveal how Bantengan art reflects the value systems, beliefs, and social norms prevalent in East Javanese society. Every movement, costume, and visual element in Bantengan performances holds profound meaning, which can be analyzed through a semiotic perspective. Moreover, cultural semiotics analysis of traditional Bantengan art also aids in understanding how the art form adapts and evolves over time.

The research on the cultural semiotics analysis of traditional Bantengan art has been noticeably absent, leaving significant gaps in our understanding of its functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and existence. This lack of focused inquiry has hindered our ability to grasp the profound cultural significance of Bull art within its traditional context. While various studies have touched on related themes, none have delved into the specific nuances of Bantengan art. For instance, Andriansyah's research in 2021 unearthed three foundational

values of local wisdom: the relationship between humans and God, the connection between humans and the environment, and the dynamics between humans themselves. Sinaga, in 2022, identified four crucial aspects, including the role of Christian catechesis in avoiding Bantengan art and the necessity of understanding its interpretation from a Biblical perspective, particularly in relation to occultism. Additionally, Baiti Wistyoningsih's work in 2020 shed light on the multifaceted nature of Bantengan art myths, revealing their depth in religious, social, and personal realms. Despite its historical role as entertainment and economic sustenance, Bantengan art offers profound insights into the resilience and adaptability of local communities, presenting itself as a valuable avenue for cultural exploration and learning.

Furthermore, there are studies that employ similar approaches, such as those conducted by (Lasino et al., 2023) and (Saud et al., 2023). Both studies examine culture using a cultural semiotics approach and delve into the meanings in songs using hermeneutic approaches. Moreover, there are studies aligned with cultural context or intercultural communication, such as those by (Hairus Salikin et al., 2021); (Muta'allim, at al., 2021); (Irsyadi et al., 2022); and (Yudistira, R., 2023). These studies contribute significantly to understanding cultural values in the era of globalization. Furthermore, several studies investigate the function of language in society, education, and tolerance, such as those by (Muta'allim et al., 2020); (Muta'allim et al., 2021); (Muta'allim, et al., 2022); (Yudistira et al., 2022); and (Haryono et al., 2023). These studies provide valuable insights into the role of language in society, education, and within religious contexts, ultimately fostering more humane relationships among individuals. Furthermore, there are studies focusing on the role of language in various contexts such as politics, culture, education, religion, Islamic boarding schools (Pesantren), filmmaking, and society, conducted by (Akhmad Sofyan et al., 2022); (Sofyan, Badrudin, et al., 2022); (Sofyan, Firmansyah, et al., 2022); (Merizawati et al., 2023); (Irsyadi, 2023); (Mahardhani et al., 2023); (Julhadi et al., 2023); (Dumiyati et al., 2023); (Suryanti et al., 2023); and (Karuru et al., 2023). These studies provide in-depth insights into the function or role of language in facilitating effective and humane communication in various contexts, including within Islamic boarding

schools, culture, religion, diversity, and society in general.

Based on several previous studies, researchers have not found specific research examining the functions, symbolic meanings, morality, and existence of the Bantengan art. Although Bantengan art has existed for centuries and continues to be performed to this day, comprehensive understanding of its functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and existence is still minimal. Additionally, some communities do not fully understand the functions, symbolic meanings, and moral significance of these art performances, as well as their existence in this era of globalization. Therefore, researchers are very interested in conducting a study on the functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and existence of Bantengan art in Mojokerto and Malang Regencies. Based on the background above, researchers formulate the problem, namely what are the functions, symbolic meanings, and moral significance contained in Bantengan art in Mojokerto and Malang Regencies, and how is its existence in this era of globalization? To answer this problem, a cultural semiotics approach is required. This approach will enable researchers to conduct an in-depth analysis of the elements of Bantengan art, such as movements, costumes, music, and narratives, and uncover the hidden symbolic meanings and moral significance within them. Additionally, the cultural semiotics approach will help understand how Bantengan art adapts and persists in the current context of globalization. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to further understanding of Bantengan art and the cultural and moral values it embodies. It is also hoped that this research will increase awareness among communities about the importance of preserving traditional art and local cultural heritage amidst the ongoing tide of globalization.

Cultural semiotics, a field of study, delves into how symbols and signs convey meaning within human culture. It explores how language, images, gestures, and actions are employed and understood within specific cultural contexts. The theory of cultural semiotics elucidates how these signs embody concepts, values, and societal norms, as well as the processes of communication and cultural comprehension stemming from their interpretation. By grasping cultural semiotics, researchers can unravel the intricacies and fluidity of human culture, alongside its role in

shaping identity and fostering collective understanding within societies. In this research, C.S. Peirce's Semiotics theory serves as the foundation for developing a semiotic framework. Peirce's theory, renowned for its comprehensive approach, centers on triadic semiosis involving the representamen, object, and interpretant, while also acknowledging the subjective aspect of the interpretation process.

II. METHODS

This study utilizes a qualitative approach aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of the functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and existence of traditional Bantengan art in Mojokerto and Malang Regencies. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore the complexity and depth of the phenomena studied and to understand the cultural context surrounding Bantengan art. The data for this research are derived from traditional Bantengan art performances in Mojokerto and Malang Regencies. Direct observation of Bantengan performances and interviews with various stakeholders such as religious figures, artists, cultural experts, and local communities serve as the primary data sources. Additionally, document analysis is conducted to support the research.

The data collection techniques employed in this study include:

1. **Participatory Observation:** The researcher directly observes traditional Bantengan performances, recording observations and taking notes regarding the functions, symbolic meanings, and moral significance depicted in the art form.
2. **Interviews:** Interviews are conducted with various stakeholders, including religious figures, artists, cultural experts, and members of the local community in Mojokerto and Malang. These interviews aim to gather insights into the perceptions, beliefs, and cultural significance associated with Bantengan art.
3. **Document Analysis:** Relevant documents such as historical records, cultural artifacts, and academic literature are analyzed to provide additional context and background information on Bantengan art and its cultural significance.

4. **Data Verification and Interpretation:** The collected data are verified for accuracy and consistency. Subsequently, the data are coded and interpreted according to the research objectives, focusing on identifying patterns, themes, and underlying meanings associated with Bantengan art.
5. **Presentation of Results:** The findings of the research are presented in a clear and organized manner, often utilizing tables or diagrams to facilitate understanding. The results highlight the functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and continued existence of Bantengan art in Mojokerto and Malang Regencies, contributing to a deeper understanding of local cultural practices and heritage.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The research findings affirm that the traditional art of Bantengan not only holds diverse functions, symbolic meanings, and moral messages depicting the spirit of bravery, solidarity, and sacrifice during the resistance against the Dutch colonialists, but also continues to thrive in the cities of Malang and Mojokerto. This signifies its value and continuity in the local cultural heritage. Furthermore, there have been adaptations and evolutions in the art of Bantengan in response to social, political, and economic changes, as well as the impacts of technology and globalization influencing the interpretation of this art form.

DISCUSSION

The Functions of The Traditional Art of Bantengan

In recent years, the function of the Bantengan art has been to enliven events such as weddings, circumcisions, and various other occasions. The Bantengan culture plays a role in shaping the behavior of its supporting community to always live in the spirit of mutual cooperation and togetherness, as well as maintaining a sense of unity. The traditional art of Bantengan serves various functions in the cultural and societal contexts where it is practiced. Here are several common functions of the traditional art of Bantengan presented in this table.

Table 1.1: The Functions of The Traditional Art of Bantengan

| Data Code | Functions | Interpretation or Explanation |
|-----------|----------------------------------|---|
| FTAB01 | Entertainment | One of the main functions of traditional Bantengan art is as a means of entertainment for the local community. Bantengan performances often become part of traditional celebrations, festivals, or religious events to provide entertainment to the audience and create a lively atmosphere. |
| FTAB02 | Cultural Education | Through Bantengan performances, cultural values, history, and local traditions can be learned and preserved. Important stories and legends in the local culture are often depicted in Bantengan performances, aiding in the dissemination and preservation of cultural heritage. |
| FTAB03 | Rituals and Ceremonies | Bantengan is often involved in traditional ceremonies or specific rituals, such as religious ceremonies or celebrations of important days in the local religious or cultural calendar. Bantengan performances can have sacred or spiritual significance for the practicing community. |
| FTAB04 | Community Identity Strengthening | Traditional arts like Bantengan can serve as symbols of identity for specific communities or ethnic groups. Through the practice and performance of this art, the community can strengthen solidarity and togetherness among its members and reinforce their connection to their cultural heritage. |
| FTAB05 | Tourism and Local Economy | In some areas, traditional arts like Bantengan also have the potential to support the tourism sector and local economy. Bantengan performances can attract tourists interested in experiencing local culture, providing a positive impact on the local economy through the sale of handicrafts or tourism services. |
| FTAB06 | Modern Entertainment | Besides its traditional functions, Bantengan can also be adapted and used as modern entertainment in the context of city events or cultural festivals. This makes Bantengan an attractive attraction for audiences from various cultural backgrounds |

These functions may vary depending on the cultural, historical, and social contexts of the community practicing the traditional art of Bantengan.

Symbolic Meaning in Traditional Bantengan Art

Based on the results analyzed using C.S. Pierce's semiotic concept, it can be elaborated in the table below, which includes interpretations of symbols contained in elements such as masks, movements, music, and specific scenes in Bantengan performances.

Table 1.2: Symbolic Meaning in Traditional Bantengan Art

| Data Code | Symbols | Meaning |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|
| SM01 | <i>Topeng Bantengan</i> | Symbolizing the fate of the people during the colonial period, the Bantengan mask is chosen to represent the strength and cooperation among them. The reason for selecting the bull symbol is because Banteng is considered an animal known for its high level of solidarity. |
| SM02 | <i>Topeng Macan</i> | The interpretation suggests that the colonial rulers are depicted by the tiger mask, symbolizing power and strength in the jungle, where all animals submit to its presence. This reflects the dominance exerted by the colonial population over the indigenous people. The colonialists are represented by the jungle or forest, indicating that the law of the jungle or karma principle is highly applicable and holds true within it. |
| SM03 | <i>Topeng Kera</i> | Depicting the cunning faction, the monkey mask in Bantengan art |

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|---|
| | | reflects those who exploit the conflicts between the people and the colonial powers for personal gain. Monkeys are considered symbols of cunningness capable of manipulating conflicts between the two groups, sometimes by supporting one side for their own interests. |
| SM04 | <i>Solah Bantengan</i> | Representing the people's struggle against colonialism. <i>Solah Bantengan</i> in traditional Bantengan art expresses the skills that served as the primary weapon of the people in facing the colonizers. The use of pencak silat in <i>solah Bantengan</i> reflects the reality of the past when the Indonesian people lacked access to any weapons to resist the colonizers. Therefore, pencak silat becomes a symbol of courage and resilience in the resistance against colonial oppression. |
| SM05 | <i>Solah Macan</i> | Continuously suppressing the movements of the bull, <i>Solah Macan</i> (tiger dance) in Bantengan art signifies the strong pressure exerted by the colonial forces. The agile movements of the colonial forces depict their superiority and advantage in the conflict. This reflects the profound dominance of the colonial powers in suppressing the indigenous people, with a solid defense akin to the movements of a tiger. |
| SM06 | <i>Solah Kera</i> | The monkey plays a cunning role in Bantengan art, where it moves shrewdly when both sides are engaged in combat, often providing unilateral support to one side. This indicates the existence of certain factions exploiting the weaknesses of the two conflicting parties, sometimes acting as proxies for one side to achieve their own goals. |
| SM07 | Musical Melodies | The music in Bantengan art is interpreted as the spirit of resistance continuously upheld by the people against colonialism. In the context of Bantengan art, the music should never cease during any performance. This signifies that the spirit of the Indonesian people must always burn brightly and never diminish until they achieve independence. |
| SM08 | Prayers and Invocation of Spirits | The prayers in the scenes where prayers are offered reflect the people's hope for victory in the struggle against the colonizers. Meanwhile, the invocation of spirits indicates the belief in ancestral spirits' assistance in driving out the colonizers. |
| SM09 | Possession | Possession in Bantengan art reflects divine intervention through spirits possessing the performers, causing scenes to become uncontrollable. In this context, the bull is more susceptible to possession. This portrays the attention and assistance provided by ancestors to the Indonesian people in their struggle against the colonizers to maintain Indonesia's independence. |
| SM10 | Victory of the Bull | The victory always attributed to the bull at the end of the performance symbolizes goodness, while the tiger represents the opposite. The term "Bantengan" remains relevant today as a symbol of victory because it is the bull that always emerges victorious in the struggle. This becomes a prayer continuously uttered in every performance, both before and after the colonial period. |

Therefore, the symbols in Bantengan art not only reflect the dynamics of the struggle between the people and the colonial powers but also depict the spirit of resistance and efforts to preserve identity and freedom.

The Moral Significance of Traditional Bantengan Art

The traditional Bantengan art contains a number of moral values that serve as guidelines for the communities of Mojokerto and Malang in their daily lives. The moral values in traditional Bantengan art can be outlined in the following table.

Table 1.3: The Moral Significance of Traditional Bantengan Art

| Data Code | Significance Values | Exposition or Reason |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|
| MS01 | Mutual Cooperation | The value of togetherness or mutual cooperation is reflected when all Bantengan performers collaborate and work together in organizing the Bantengan procession around the village. |
| MS02 | Beauty | The value of beauty is reflected in the performance that utilizes typical Javanese equipment, ranging from gamelan, costumes, to masks, adding charm to the event. Additionally, beauty is also radiated when gamelan players play music accompanying the movements of the Bantengan performers. |
| MS03 | Truth | The value of truth is reflected when the players earnestly perform or play the Bantengan art. This is evident during the battle between the Banteng and the tiger, where the Banteng successfully defeats the tiger players, symbolizing the Colonial Nation that colonized indigenous communities. This situation illustrates the belief that truth or goodness will inevitably triumph over evil. |
| MS04 | Goodness | The value of goodness is reflected in the purpose of creating Bantengan, which is to educate the indigenous people to become fighters and defeat the incoming colonizers. This is also evident when the Bantengan players strive to defeat the Tiger players, who symbolize the colonizers. |
| MS05 | Responsibility | The value of responsibility is reflected in the demeanor of a Bantengan fighter who is responsible for controlling the Bantengan, ensuring that the movements of the Bantengan remain controlled. |
| MS06 | Religious | The religious value is reflected in every prayer directed to the Almighty God, both in practice sessions and performances. Always seeking help from the Creator demonstrates awareness of dependence on Him in all aspects. |
| MS07 | Faith | The value of faith is reflected in the Claket village community, particularly among the Bantengan art players, who believe in supernatural phenomena. They believe in the existence of beings created by Allah SWT other than humans. Additionally, the value of faith is also evident in the storyline, reminding people to have faith in Allah SWT and all His creations, including demons and jinn. |
| MS08 | Evil | The values of wrongdoing or evil are reflected in the roles of the Tiger actors as symbols of colonizers, as well as the roles of the Monkey actors who serve as agitators between the Banteng and Tiger. The actions of the Tiger and Monkey are reprehensible as they cause discomfort and tension within the community. |

The Existence and Challenges of Bantengan Art in The Globalization Era

In this era of globalization, traditional Bantengan art remains existent and sustainable. This is because the communities of Mojokerto and Malang frequently organize performances of this art, both in formal and informal events. Additionally, Bantengan art members remain actively involved in various events such as festivals, demonstrating their commitment to preserving this art. To ensure the continuity of this art, the community seeks new members

interested in joining. The role of the government is also evident in supporting Bantengan art, as evidenced by several awards received by this art form from various events, providing additional encouragement for Bantengan art members. Furthermore, the emergence of new Bantengan art indicates the high enthusiasm of the community and Bantengan art members in preserving and revitalizing this traditional art. However, there are several differences between the new version of traditional Bantengan art and the more classic version. The main difference lies

in the possession scenes. The old version of traditional Bantengan art maintains the possession scenes because they are considered essential elements of authentic Bantengan art. However, the new version of traditional art has eliminated these possession scenes and instead focuses more on governance elements. This means that the new version of traditional Bantengan art emphasizes the entertainment aspect or the performance itself. As a result, the government tends to prefer or invite the new version of traditional Bantengan art to official events.

In the current era of technology and globalization, traditional arts such as Bantengan face challenges but also discover new opportunities for growth. The influence of social media and information technology allows Bantengan to be more easily accessible to a wider audience. Videos of Bantengan performances can be quickly shared and watched online, enabling this art form to be promoted globally. This facilitates the introduction of traditional art to a broader audience, including the younger generation accustomed to technology. Schools, cultural institutions, and non-governmental organizations play a vital role in educating and preserving traditional Bantengan art. Education and training programs should be designed to teach Bantengan art skills to the younger generation, ensuring that the art form continues to thrive in the long term.

The government, both at the local and national levels, should provide formal recognition and support to traditional Bantengan art through various policies, programs, and funding allocations. These steps include organizing traditional art events in cultural festivals, providing subsidies to artists and craftsmen, and promoting cultural tourism. Artists and cultural activists need to adopt a collaborative and innovative approach to maintain the relevance of traditional Bantengan art in the modern era. This can be done by combining traditional elements with contemporary elements, such as modern music or multimedia technology, to create performances that appeal to a wider audience. There is an increasing awareness among communities about the importance of preserving and promoting local and national cultural heritage amidst globalization. Community initiatives to organize cultural events, festivals, or traditional art exhibitions can help enhance appreciation for

traditional arts such as Bantengan. Although traditional Bantengan art may face challenges in the era of technology and globalization, with collaborative efforts among various stakeholders including the government, communities, and artists, as well as the use of technology to promote and preserve the art, its existence can be sustained and even strengthened in the future.

Adaptation and Evolution of Bantengan Art in the Context of Globalization

The adaptation and evolution of Bantengan art in the context of globalization involve significant changes in response to evolving social, political, economic dynamics, as well as the impact of technology and globalization. As an integral part of Javanese cultural heritage, Bantengan art has undergone notable transformations to accommodate the dynamics of the times. These changes include modifications in content, performance techniques, and societal perceptions of this art form. In response to social changes, Bantengan art pays attention to the needs and demands of modern society. Shifts in social values and lifestyles influence the themes and messages conveyed through Bantengan performances. For example, with society becoming increasingly connected through technology and mass media, themes such as environmental awareness and peace are often integrated into Bantengan performances as a response to social developments.

Political changes have had a significant impact on Bantengan art. During certain political periods, this art form may experience restrictions or government scrutiny, which can influence the content and presentation format. However, conversely, Bantengan art can also serve as a means to voice political aspirations and critique government policies, especially in the context of democratic development. Economic changes, including globalization and industrialization, have also affected Bantengan art. This art form must adapt to an increasingly open market and intense competition with other arts and entertainment. This is reflected in the use of modern technology in Bantengan performances, promotion through social media, as well as efforts to seek sponsors or financial support to sustain this art form.

The impact of technology and globalization plays a crucial role in the interpretation of Bantengan art. The ease of access to information and international cultural

exchange has transformed how both local and international communities understand and appreciate this art form. Bantengan art may also be influenced by external arts and cultures, either directly or indirectly, shaping further evolution of this art. The adaptation and evolution of Bantengan art in the context of social, political, and economic changes, as well as the impact of technology and globalization, demonstrate the flexibility and resilience of traditional art in facing the challenges of the times. Despite undergoing changes, Bantengan art still holds traditional values and plays an important role in enriching the cultural life of Javanese and Indonesian society more broadly.

Research on the cultural semiotics analysis of traditional Bantengan art: exploring functions, symbolic meanings, moral significance, and existence contributes to and implies implications for the general public. Cultural semiotics analysis of traditional Bantengan art takes us on a deep journey into the complexity of cultural meanings. Bantengan art is not just an ordinary traditional performance but a mirror reflecting the values, beliefs, and aspirations of the East Javanese community. By using a semiotic framework, researchers begin to explore the functions of Bantengan art. It is not only mere entertainment but also a powerful communication tool, facilitating social interaction, and conveying messages related to history and community struggles.

Then, the researcher reflects on the symbolic meanings in every aspect of Bantengan art, from the masks to the movements containing messages of resistance and bravery. The gamelan music also plays an integral part in creating a profound atmosphere and emotion. However, cultural semiotics analysis takes the researcher further to delve into the moral significance of Bantengan art. From values such as solidarity, truth, goodness, to responsibility and belief, this art reflects the ethics and morality in community life. Finally, in the context of existence, Bantengan art continues to adapt and endure in the modern era through collaboration and innovation. Artists and cultural activists continue to strive to preserve and maintain the relevance of this art while respecting its cultural roots and traditions. Thus, cultural semiotics analysis of traditional Bantengan art inspires a deep understanding of the rich cultural heritage and its significant role in enriching the cultural life of the Javanese and Indonesian communities.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the cultural semiotics analysis of traditional Bantengan art has illuminated the intricate layers of cultural meaning embedded within this ancient practice. Through this exploration, we have unraveled the multifaceted functions, symbolic depths, and moral significance inherent in Bantengan performances. It has become evident that Bantengan serves not only as a spectacle but also as a profound reflection of the values and historical narratives of Javanese society, encapsulating themes of struggle, morality, and the eternal battle between good and evil. Despite the pervasive influences of globalization, the resilience of Bantengan as a cultural art form endures, bolstered by dedicated efforts in cultural preservation, innovative collaborations, and ongoing support from governmental and community stakeholders alike.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study. Constraints related to data collection, analytical methods, and the contextual nuances of Javanese culture may have influenced the depth of our analysis. Moving forward, future research endeavors should not only strive to address these limitations but also expand upon them, delving into broader avenues of exploration. This could entail the development of methodologies that allow for deeper ethnographic studies or the integration of interdisciplinary approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of Traditional Bantengan Art in shaping cultural identity and community education.

Moreover, it is imperative to identify specific gaps in our understanding that necessitate further investigation. By pinpointing these areas of inquiry, we can chart a course toward advancing the field and leveraging Traditional Bantengan Art as an effective educational tool and catalyst for cultural preservation and empowerment within the community. Through continued scholarly inquiry and collaboration, we can ensure that the legacy of Bantengan endures, enriching future generations with the profound insights it offers into the tapestry of Javanese culture and society.

REFERENCES

- Afifah, D. N., & Irawan, I. (2021). Upaya pelestarian kesenian Bantengan di wilayah Prigen Kabupaten Pasuruan (dalam perspektif tindakan sosial Max Weber). *Jurnal Integrasi Dan Harmoni Inovatif Ilmu-Ilmu*

- Sosial, 1(5), 547–557. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um063v1i5p547-557>
- Akhmad Sofyan, Riantino Yudistira, Muta'allim, Fahmi Reza Alfani, & Abdul Azizul Ghaffar. (2022). The Analysis of Conversational Implicature Between Students and Teachers at Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 8(1), 65–72. <https://doi.org/10.55637/jr.8.1.4042.65-72>
- Anam, M. C., & Mulyatno, F. H. (2019). Tari Bantengan di Dusun Randegan, Desa Jatirejo, Kabupaten Mojokerto. *GREGET*. 18(2), 140–148.
- Andriansyah, M. A. I. H. (2021). Nilai Kearifan Lokal Kesenian Banteng sebagai Sumber Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Siswa di Sekolah. *Skripsi: Universitas Islam Malang*.
- Asri, M., Rr, U., & Cindrakasih, R. (2023). Struktural Functionalism sebagai Proses Transmisi Kesenian Bantengan Kota Batu. 5, 284–293.
- Baiti Wistyoningsih. (2020). Mitos Seni Bantengan Masyarakat Jawa Di Kabupaten Mojokerto.
- Desprianto, R. D. (2013). Kesenian Bantengan Mojokerto Kajian Makna Simbolik Dan Nilai Moral. *Avatara, e-Journal Pendidikan Sejarah*, 1(1), 150–163.
- Dumiyati, D., Musnandar, A., Julhadi, J., Na'im, Z., & Muta'allim, M. (2023). The Development Of Islamic Education Curriculum On Building Religious Moderation At Manbaul Ulum Islamic Boarding School. *AL-WIJDĀN Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, 8(3), 359–381. <https://doi.org/10.58788/alwijdn.v8i3.2607>
- Fadeli, M., Alfraita, A., Keisha, A., & Wibowo, A. (2024). Eksistensi Perempuan dalam Pelestarian Budaya Lokal Seni Bantengan di Kecamatan Pacet Mojokerto di Tengah Diterminasi Teknologi Komunikasi. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional & Call for Paper "Penguatan Kapasitas Sumber Daya Manusia Menuju Indonesia Emas 2024"* 9(1), 30–38.
- Faris, A., Khoyyum, A., Thoriqoh, I. U., & Nisak, L. (2017). Seni Tradisional Bantengan Di Dusun Boro Panggungrejo Gondanglegi Malang. *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah INTAJ*, 1(1), 49–76. <https://doi.org/10.35897/intaj.v1i1.60>
- Hairus Salikin, Muta'allim, Fahmi Reza Alfani, Hosaini, & Hasan Sayfullah. (2021). Traditional Madurese Engagement Amidst the Social Change of the Kangean Society. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 7(1), 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.7.1.2633.32-42>
- Haryono, A., Wibisono, B., Sofyan, A., & Muta'allim. (2023). The Use of Speech Levels by Madurese Students as Implementation of Politeness Principles in Islamic Boarding School in Bondowoso, East Java. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 58(2), 93–104. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35741/issn.0258-2724.58.2.9>
- Hotel, P. P. (2022). Halaman 799. 73, 798–811.
- Irsyadi, A. N & Muta'allim. (2023). Teaching English for Tertiary Students in Pesantren: A Narrative Using Hybrid Learning. 08(02), 137–149.
- Irsyadi, A. N., Fitriyah, N. M., Surabaya, U. N., & Hanifiyah, F., Muta'allim. (2022). Menakar Potensi Nilai Kearifan Lokal dalam Sastra Daerah. *Haluan Sastra Budaya* 6 (2), 145–162
- Jonathan, I., Harsanto, P. W., Milka, R., Basuki, N., Studi, P., Komunikasi, D., Seni, F., Petra, U. K., & Siwalankerto, J. (2012). Kesenian Tradisional Bantengan Di Kota Mojokerto. 1–10.
- Julhadi, J., Muta'allim, M., Fitri, R., Efendi, Z., & Yahya, M. (2023). Malay Culture-Based Local Content Curriculum in Islamic Education. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 7(2), 506. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v7i2.433>
- Karuru, P., Muta'allim., Suwarno, S. A., Fatwa Setiawan, A., & Junaida Sekolah. (2023). Improving Students' Higher Order Thinking Skills Through a Question and Answer Method. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(3), 340–349. <https://ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/jret>
- Afifah, D. N., & Irawan, I. (2021). Upaya pelestarian kesenian Bantengan di wilayah Prigen Kabupaten Pasuruan (dalam perspektif tindakan sosial Max Weber). *Jurnal Integrasi Dan Harmoni Inovatif Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 1(5), 547–557. <https://doi.org/10.17977/um063v1i5p547-557>
- Akhmad Sofyan, Riantino Yudistira, Muta'allim, Fahmi Reza Alfani, & Abdul Azizul Ghaffar. (2022). The Analysis of Conversational Implicature Between Students and Teachers at Al-Azhar Islamic Boarding School. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 8(1), 65–72. <https://doi.org/10.55637/jr.8.1.4042.65-72>
- Anam, M. C., & Mulyatno, F. H. (2019). Tari Bantengan di Dusun Randegan, Desa Jatirejo, Kabupaten Mojokerto. *GREGET*. 18(2), 140–148.
- Andriansyah, M. A. I. H. (2021). Nilai Kearifan Lokal Kesenian Banteng sebagai Sumber Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Siswa di Sekolah. *Skripsi: Universitas Islam Malang*.

- Asri, M., Rr, U., & Cindrakasih, R. (2023). Struktural Functionalism sebagai Proses Transmisi Kesenian Bantengan Kota Batu. 5, 284–293.
- Baiti Wistyoningsih. (2020). Mitos Seni Bantengan Masyarakat Jawa Di Kabupaten Mojokerto.
- Desprianto, R. D. (2013). Kesenian Bantengan Mojokerto Kajian Makna Simbolik Dan Nilai Moral. *Avatara, e-Journal Pendidikan Sejarah*, 1(1), 150–163.
- Dumiyati, D., Musnandar, A., Julhadi, J., Na'im, Z., & Muta'allim, M. (2023). The Development Of Islamic Education Curriculum On Building Religious Moderation At Manbaul Ulum Islamic Boarding School. *AL-WIJDĀN Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, 8(3), 359–381. <https://doi.org/10.58788/alwijdn.v8i3.2607>
- Fadeli, M., Alfraita, A., Keisha, A., & Wibowo, A. (2024). Eksistensi Perempuan dalam Pelestarian Budaya Lokal Seni Bantengan di Kecamatan Pacet Mojokerto di Tengah Diterminasi Teknologi Komunikasi. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional & Call for Paper "Penguatan Kapasitas Sumber Daya Manusia Menuju Indonesia Emas 2024"* 9(1), 30–38.
- Faris, A., Khoyyum, A., Thoriqoh, I. U., & Nisak, L. (2017). Seni Tradisional Bantengan Di Dusun Boro Panggungrejo Gondanglegi Malang. *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmiah INTAJ*, 1(1), 49–76. <https://doi.org/10.35897/intaj.v1i1.60>
- Hairus Salikin, Muta'allim, Fahmi Reza Alfani, Hosaini, & Hasan Sayfullah. (2021). Traditional Madurese Engagement Amidst the Social Change of the Kangean Society. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 7(1), 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.7.1.2633.32-42>
- Haryono, A., Wibisono, B., Sofyan, A., & Muta'allim. (2023). The Use of Speech Levels by Madurese Students as Implementation of Politeness Principles in Islamic Boarding School in Bondowoso, East Java. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 58(2), 93-104. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35741/issn.0258-2724.58.2.9>.
- Hotel, P. P. (2022). Halaman 799. 73, 798–811.
- Irsyadi, A. N & Muta'allim. (2023). Teaching English for Tertiary Students in Pesantren : A Narrative Using Hybrid Learning. 08(02), 137–149.
- Irsyadi, A. N., Fitriyah, N. M., Surabaya, U. N., & Hanifiyah, F., Muta'allim. (2022). Menakar Potensi Nilai Kearifan Lokal dalam Sastra Daerah. *Haluan Sastra Budaya* 6 (2), 145-162
- Jonathan, I., Harsanto, P. W., Milka, R., Basuki, N., Studi, P., Komunikasi, D., Seni, F., Petra, U. K., & Siwalankerto, J. (2012). Kesenian Tradisional Bantengan Di Kota Mojokerto. 1–10.
- Julhadi, J., Muta'allim, M., Fitri, R., Efendi, Z., & Yahya, M. (2023). Malay Culture-Based Local Content Curriculum in Islamic Education. *Al-Hayat: Journal of Islamic Education*, 7(2), 506. <https://doi.org/10.35723/ajie.v7i2.433>
- Karuru, P., Muta'allim., Suwarno, S. A., Fatwa Setiawan, A., & Junaida Sekolah. (2023). Improving Students' Higher Order Thinking Skills Through a Question and Answer Method. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(3), 340–349. <https://ejournal.warmadewa.ac.id/index.php/jret>
- Lasino, Mohamad Sudi, Achmad Naufal Irsyadi, Nadia Amalia, & Muwafiqus Shobri. (2023). The Semiotic Study of Slametan Ngawandasa Ndinteni: Understanding The Significance of Symbolic Communication in the Modernization Era of East Kasiyan Village. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(2), 185–192. <https://doi.org/10.55637/jr.9.2.7732.185-192>
- Mahardhani, A. J., Nawiruddin, N., Jalaluddin, J., Julhadi, J., & Muta'allim, M. (2023). The Kyai's Position in Rural Local Democracy Based on Patronage Politics at Tapal Kuda. *Muslim Heritage*, 8(1), 115–132. <https://doi.org/10.21154/muslimheritage.v8i1.6004>
- Merizawati, H., Munawir, A., Sulita, I., Arifin, S., & Muta'allim. (2023). Enhancing Students' Speaking Proficiency through Storytelling Method at Education College of Togo Ambarsari Bondowoso. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(3), 321-330.
- Muta'allim, Alfani, F. R., Mahidin, L., Agustin, Y. D & Wicaksi, D (2021). Fungsi Adjektiva Komparatif dalam Bahasa Madura Dialek Kangean dan Dampaknya bagi Masyarakat Kangean: Kajian Pragmatik. *Totobuang*, 9(2), 257-271. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26499/tbng.v9i2.299>
- Muta'allim, Munir, M., Pathollah, A.G., Nawiroh, L., & Muhalli. (2022). Concepts of Religious Moderation Education at Tapal Kuda: Linguistic Analysis and Local Wisdom. In *Proceedings AnCoMS IV*. Surabaya 26-27 February, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya Jl. A. Yani 117 Surabaya.
- Muta'allim, M., Sofyan, A., & Haryono, A. (2020). Superlative Adjectives of Kangean Dialect of Madurese Language: a Pragmatic Study (Adjektiva Superlatif Bahasa Madura Dialek Kangean: Sebuah Kajian Pragmatik). *Leksema: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 5(1), 15–26. <https://doi.org/10.22515/ljbs.v5i1.2057>
- Muta'allim, Nawawi, Fahmi Reza Alfani, Abdul Azizul Ghaffar, & Ali Wafi. (2021). Codes Switching and Codes Mixing of Sellers and Buyers in Traditional Markets: Case Study of Market Kampong Asembagus Situbondo. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 7(2), 121–129. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jr.7.2.2627.121-129>
- NEGORO, R. B. K., & Rizal A, D. C. (2020). Pendampingan Masyarakat Dalam Pelestarian Budaya Bantengan Di Kabupaten Mojokerto. *Jurnal Pengabdian Dharma Wacana*, 1(2), 50–

58. <https://doi.org/10.37295/jpdw.v1i2.17>
- Qonitati, S. (n.d.). Mekanisme Survival Seni Bantengan Lama Versus Baru dalam Persaingan. Universitas Negeri Surabaya.
- Radhia, H. A. (2019). Pergelaran Bantengan “ Banteng Wareng ” Madyopuro Malang : Telaah Antropologi Kesenian PENDAHULUAN Nusantara kaya akan khazanah seni dan budaya . Tak terkecuali diwilayah Jawa Timur menyimpan kesenian yang khas seperti pada kesenian Reog , Jaranan , tari. *Jurnal Studi Budaya Nusantara*, 3(2), 117–123.
- Saud, J., Naim, Z., & Solissa, E. M. (2023). Hermeneutics Study: Analysis of Denotative And Connotative Meaning in the Song Berita Kepada Kawan by Ebiet G. Ade. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(3), 350–364.
- Sinaga, R. (2022). Budaya Bantengan: Pemuridan Komunitas Remaja Pemuda Kristen Sitiarjo (Kompas). *Makarios: Jurnal Teologi Kontekstual*, 1(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.52157/mak.v1i1.160>
- Sofyan, A., Badrudin, A., Fitriani, D. N., & Muta'allim, M. (2022). Types and Functions of Illocutionary Speech Acts on Inter-Character Dialogue in Tilik Short Films. *Lingua: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 18(2), 148–156. <https://doi.org/10.15294/lingua.v18i2.36163>
- Sofyan, A., Firmansyah, M. B., Muta'allim, Solissa, E. M., & Rosikh, F. (2022). Islamic Boarding School Linguistic Landscape In The Development Of Arabic Language Skills And Islamic Knowledge. *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences*, 3(6), 2178–2185.
- Suryanti., Saud, J., Rachman, A., Muta'allim., & Amiruddin. (2023). Semantic Language Skills in 2-Year-Old Children: A Case Study of Universal Substantive Acquisition at Kampung Baru. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 9(2), 203–210. <https://doi.org/10.55637/jr.9.2.7723.203-210>
- Umbar, K. (2015). Kajian semiotika c.s. pierce dalam kesen. Konferensi Internasional Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Daerah Indonesia, September.
- Yudistira, R., & M. (2023). Code Mixing as An Anti-Political Indiscretion among Farm Laborers at Ajung, Kalisat, Jember. *LINGUA*, 18(1), 25–35.
- Yudistira, R., Muta'allim, M., Nurcaya, N., Julhadi, J., & Pattiasina, P. P. J. (2022). the Role of Linguistics and Local Wisdom on Knowing Harmony Between Religions At Tana Toraja. *Muslim Heritage*, 7(2), 409–431. <https://doi.org/10.21154/muslimheritage.v7i2.5023>