

The Development and Function of the *Gara-gara* Scene in the Surakarta Style Shadow Puppet Performances

Sarwanto, Sunardi, Jaka Riyanto

Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta

Jl. Ki Hadjar Dewantara No. 19, Kentingan, Jebres, Surakarta 57126

* E-mail of the corresponding author: gunowijoyo@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper aimed to examine the development and function of the *gara-gara* scene in the Surakarta style shadow puppet performances. The *gara-gara* scene is the scene that is shown first in the *pathet sanga* part of the shadow puppet performances. There were two problems studied: (1) how the development of the *gara-gara* scene is; and (2) how the function of the *gara-gara* scene is in shadow puppet performances. Problems were analyzed with the theories of development and art function. The method used was literature study, interviews, and observation.

The analysis results showed that the *gara-gara* scene was originally only presented in a play which contains a scene of the knight in meditation. In its development, the *gara-gara* scene is presented in every play. In addition, the *gara-gara* scene in the Surakarta style shadow puppet performances has developed in *pocapan* (narration), *ginem* (dialogue), and *karawitan pakeliran*, which includes gamelan instruments and the songs performed. This development contains two factors, namely internal and external factors. The function of the *gara-gara* scene includes the functions of communication, education, entertainment, and propaganda media. The conclusion of this paper states that the scene of *gara-gara* has developed along with the dynamics of changing times. The *gara-gara* scene has various functions for the social life of society.

Keywords: *gara-gara* scene, development, function, shadow puppet performance, Surakarta style

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1. Introduction

Shadow puppet performances as a genre of Indonesian performing arts have lived and developed in Indonesia for a long time. Before Islam entered Indonesia, shadow puppets had become a part of people's lives, especially in Java. Of all kinds of wayang performances, purwa shadow puppet, hereinafter referred to as wayang kulit purwa, has a special place in the hearts of the Javanese people because it has a close bond with the Javanese people. Even the recognition of wayang as a masterpiece of intangible world cultural heritage by UNESCO on November 7, 2003, followed by Presidential Decree Number 30 of 2018, designated November 7 as National Puppet Day. This is expected to be able to provide and increase public appreciation in preserving and developing wayang, to create a dynamic and modern National Culture, following the current situation and in harmony with the advancement of Indonesian culture, as a form of implementation of Law No. 5 of 2017 on the Advancement of Culture.

Shadow puppet performances have developed both in form and function. This development is influenced by traditional heritage and the results of interactions with outside influences, which eventually lead to adaptation to the environment and social structure. In the supporting society, wayang is often used to reflect attitudes and behavior. In essence, it is so strong in influencing people's minds that it is a cultural value system supported sequentially from one generation to the next. Shadow puppet performances as it is today have gone through a long historical process and have developed from one era to the next.

The *gara-gara* scene is one of the scenes in shadow puppet performances, or to be precise, this scene is shown first in the *pathet sanga*, which is the second pathet in a shadow puppet performance. In the *Pakem Serat Sastramiruda* and *Serat Tuntunan Pedhalangan Caking Pakeliran Play Irawan Rabi*, the *gara-gara* scene is only presented in shadow puppet performances in which there is a scene of a great knight who is ascetic. In this case, the *gara-gara* scene functions as a support for the scene of the knight who is meditating. For the great knight, asceticism is an attempt to get closer to the creator to receive the blessings as expected.

In its development, especially in today's shadow puppet performances, the *gara-gara* scene (as well as the *limbukan* scene) is always shown in every shadow puppet performance, because this scene is the prima donna for today's audiences. As for the function of the *gara-gara* scene, apart from being a medium for entertainment, it is also a medium for communication, education, information, political party propaganda, propaganda media, conveying social messages concerning morals, environment, awareness of the nation and state, and appreciation of the art of puppetry.

The *gara-gara scene* is a wayang art product of national culture full of teaching values about life. In wayang, ethical, religious, and aesthetic values are found, which are a unity of the noble values of Indonesian culture (Sunardi et al., 2019). Ethical values lead to the teachings of the norms of human life; (2) religious values lead to the teachings of divinity, and (3) aesthetic values are oriented to the aesthetic aspects of art. These three

values become the strength of wayang so that they are transformed into teachings of character packaged into spectacles, guidance, and orders. Wayang art is a vehicle for entertainment, lessons and a basic principle for society. This means that the wayang art has various functions for human life, including as a vehicle for entertainment and teaching morals.

Based on the phenomena mentioned above, the problems that will be discussed in this paper can be formulated, namely (1) how is the development of the *gara-gara* scene in the Surakarta style shadow puppet performance? and (2) what is the function of the *gara-gara* scene in the Surakarta style shadow puppet performances?

2. Literature Review and Research Method

Pursubaryanto (2016) researched the *gara-gara*. This paper examined the dynamics of the *gara-gara* scene in the Surakarta style shadow puppet in the mid-1950s to the post-reform era in the mid-2000s. The *gara-gara* scene is still present in the Surakarta style shadow puppet performances. Still, it follows the standard guideline, which shows that the *marwah pakem pedhalangan* is maintained. Intrinsically, the scene changes because of the desire to actualize the puppeteer's self and eliminate boredom. Extrinsically, art products require consumers to be packaged according to market tastes. The *gara-gara* scene still contains guidance on morals, environment, nation and state, and appreciation of society.

The *gara-gara* scene in the Surakarta style of puppetry tradition is contained in *Serat Sastramiruda*, *Serat Tuntunan Pedalangan Caking Pakeliran Lampahan Irawan Rabi*, and *Bauwarna Kawruh Wayang*. Initially, the *gara-gara* scene was only presented in performances showing scenes of the great knights meditating, such as Manumayasa, Palasara, Sakri, Pandu, and Arjuna. The *gara-gara* scene functions as a support for the ascetic knight scene. As for the scene's meaning, *gara-gara* is a symbol of the inner strength of a knight in meditation, causing a world upheaval, which has implications for a chaotic and frightening atmosphere. This is indicated by the pocapan *gara-gara*, which describes the chaotic conditions in nature, the fights of the *panakawan* in the form of wayang movements, and the music that accompanies the Kagok Ketanon *tembang* (Javanese song) (Junaidi, 1992).

Soetarno (2004) explained the shift in the function of wayang performances from a function as a ritual to a function as entertainment. Soetarno's study also described the function of wayang performances as a means of education and information about government programs in power to be communicated to the public in general. Other studies examine the function of wayang in teaching the community. This paper examined the Ciptoning play as an illustration of teaching wayang ethics that can be implemented in people's lives. The values contained in the play provide a reference and source of reference for the pattern of life of the Indonesian people (Solichin and Suyanto, 2011).

Another study regarding the function of wayang performances is seen in the development of wayang chronicle of the archipelago for teaching national values. The wayang babad archipelago is intended to revitalise and develop Indonesian wayang, apart from functioning to convey messages regarding the values of defending the country for the community. The representation of national values is manifested in the creation of the Diponegoro wayang play and the Palapa Oath play (Sunardi et al., 2016). Wayang studies are also related to the value of patriotism or national struggle. This study focused on the creation of wayang struggle performances to convey the values of the struggle of the nation's heroes who can serve as role models for Indonesian society. The fighting spirit of the nation's heroes is represented in the wayang play of general Soedirman Gerilya (a fighter in an irregular war carried on by an independent band), and the Untung Surapati play (Sunardi et al., 2017).

Sarwanto has researched on the function of wayang performances for the community. This paper concludes that the community believes wayang performances are a ritual for cleaning the village from various calamities that have befallen them. In this case, wayang performance art is positioned as a vehicle for creating cosmic order to create a harmonious world. Apart from being a wayang ritual, it also serves as a means of treatment for the community and the village (Sarwanto, 2008).

Sources of research data were: (a) library data about the *gara-gara* scene, which can be obtained from the ISI Surakarta library, Sana Pustaka, Reksa Pustaka, Radya Pustaka, Taman Budaya Jawa Tengah (Central Java Cultural Park), Wonogiri District Library and so on; (b) audio-visual data of wayang performances were obtained from the ISI Surakarta audio-visual library, the collection of Ki Widodo Wilis Prabowo, the collection of Begug Purnomosidhi, internet sources, etc; and (c) puppet art resource persons, including Ki Suyati, Ki Bambang Suwarno and others.

The process of collecting data with literature, interviews, and observation. The literature study was conducted to look for the diversity of the *gara-gara* scene in wayang. Interviews were conducted with selected informants to gain an understanding of the *gara-gara* scene, wayang performances, wayang puppets, and so on. Observations to observe various wayang performances, especially in the *gara-gara* and *limbuk cangik* scenes of popular puppeteers.

3. Research Results and Analysis

3.1. Gara-gara Definition

In Poerwadarminta's dictionary, *gara-gara* means disturbances in the universe such as earthquakes, heavy rains, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, etc. It can also mean an appalling event, uproar, riot, excitement, and etc (1968, p.289).

The *gara-gara* scene always depicts world chaos. This can be observed through *pocapan* or narration as well as *sabet* or wayang movements. This situation suddenly becomes silent at the same time as the character Semar appears (Kusumadilaga, 1981, p.217; Nojowirongko, 1960 Volume IV: 21). The presence of this Semar character has a strong relationship with the fading of the current *gara-gara*.

The *gara-gara* scene is the scene shown first in the *pathet sanga*, which is the second *pathet* in the shadow puppet performances. The *gara-gara* scene was initially presented in *pakeliran* with meditating knight scene. In its current development, the *gara-gara* scene is presented in every play, whether there are scenes of ascetic knights or not.



Picture 1. Semar, Gareng, Petruk, and Bagong were dressed as students (*santri*)
(Photo: Sarwanto, 2022)



Picture 2. Semar, Gareng, Petruk, and Bagong were dressed in Javanese *kejawen*
(Photo: Sarwanto, 2022)

3.2. Gara-gara Scene Development

The discussion on the development of the *gara-gara* scene is inseparable from the development of the shadow puppet performances in general. This is based on the consideration that the *gara-gara* scene is one of the scenes in the shadow puppet performances. Therefore, before discussing the development of the *gara-gara* scene, a description of the development of the shadow puppet performances will be presented first.

Updates and developments have recently rocked the world of wayang. The presence of puppeteers who are in touch with the information age and the leaps of change from industrial society are beginning to respond to reforms in puppetry.

These leaps were sparked through formal institutions such as the Department of Puppetry at ISI Surakarta and the Indonesian Art Institute (ISI) Yogyakarta and through individual puppeteers themselves. Observations of present-day wayang performances indicate that there has been a change in the form of the performance compared to the form of wayang performances during the Ki Nartasabda era. According to A. Teeuw, in traditional arts, especially Javanese, changes or deviations that occur even in small and subtle amounts have the same big effect as radical deviations in modern literature (1983, p.9). The presentation of the *pakeliran* elements is much different compared to what was done by other puppeteers and/or before them.

The spread of creativity or development can be seen as enlivening puppetry. However, on the other side, it is also seen as bringing about a decline in values in shadow puppet (*wayang kulit*) performances. Established traditional art, passed down from generation to generation in certain sub-styles, as a guide for

making art. Any change in traditional art must go through a long process and obtain approval from traditional art authorities (Feinstein, 1986, pp.18-23).

The authority holders include well-known puppeteers such as Nartasabda, Anom Suroto, Manteb Sudharsono, etc. It was from them that the development of pakeliran was launched, then followed by the next generation of young puppeteers.

The development of shadow puppet performances was initiated by Ki Nartasabda with a "new" form of *pakeliran* which had a fresh, hilarious feel, and was often interspersed with various pieces of his creations. Apart from that, Ki Nartasabda also adopted musical compositions from other regions: Sundanese, Bali, East Java, and Banyumasan. Several repertoires of sulukan from non-Surakarta styles are also explored and presented in their *pakeliran*. Besides, Ki Nartasabda also changed the conventions for the position of the arrangement of the gamelan and the seating for the *pesindhen* (singer). Before the era of Ki Nartasabda, the maximum number of *pesindhen* was three people and usually sat next to the *pengrebab* or *pengendang* facing towards the puppeteer. After that, the number of singers was more than three people, and they sat to the puppeteer's right of the and still faced the puppeteer.

Ki Nartasabda's various forms of innovation had high commercial value, providing fresh air for puppetry at that time. As a result, Ki Nartasabda among the puppetry community became famous as a master figure or reformer puppeteer. Ki Nartasabda's name is increasingly well-known and widespread in society, because his performances are often broadcast on the radio, especially through several RRI stations in various cities in Java, especially Central Java (Murtiyoso, et al., 1998, p.5, pp.29-32; Sarwanto, 2009, pp.8-9).

The development of the wayang performances by Ki Nartosabdo resulted in the occurrence of two poles of society with different views, namely the group that maintains the Pakeliran tradition and the group that likes change. For the first group, changes in pakeliran lead to a decrease in weight and a reduction in the values contained therein (Sukatno, et al., 1996, p.32).

According to Kartodirdjo, the desacralization and reduction of the symbolization of traditional art principles to become pop art is evident and occurs simultaneously in every performance. The factor of deviation and renewal seems to be seen as a risk for continuity or in other words it threatens the integrity of the created tradition. It can be understood that tradition and its system result from a society's efforts to adapt to a new environment and situation. Once formed, of course, will not simply to be forgotten. In the end, any influence from outside is seen as a threat because it can potentially cause a crisis. Loss of orientation places people in confusion and worry. Therefore, it is to be avoided as far as possible (1987, pp.71-72).

In the early 1990s in Central Java Province, a shadow puppet performance using two screens (*kelir*) appeared, better known as the PANTAP pakeliran. Pakeliran is a form of reform by government officials in Central Java. This form of presentation has similarities with the one-night shadow puppet performance when viewed from the show's elements. The difference lies more in its function as a propaganda tool for the Golkar political party during the New Order era. The things that are considered new in PANTAP's performance are: (1) the performance is performed by two puppeteers with two screens, using the technique of playing the puppets simultaneously or alternately; (2) there are additional performers, such as musicians, comedians, puppet players, and singers. Comedians, puppet performers, and singers are placed on a separate stage, and are shown during the *Limbuk* and *gara-gara* scenes which were the prima donna scenes for the audience back then.

According to Kuwato, the emergence of the two-*kelir* wayang performances, known as Pakeliran PANTAP, was initiated by Sudjadi, Head of the Level I Puppetry Arts Development Institute (GANASIDI) in Central Java Province. PANTAP was given because the performance was handled by the Standing Committee for the Puppetry Appreciation and Development (PANTAP) in Central Java (2001, p.72).

Concerning the development of *pakeliran*, including *pakem*, Murtiyoso revealed that the development efforts made by the puppeteers to adapt to this era are very reasonable. Even though in the world of puppetry, there are known standards or guidelines for puppeteers, in reality, these guidelines have never been strictly followed by the puppeteers. Within certain limits, the puppeteer is still very free to set aside. Because actually the limit is also not clearly visible. The *pakem* is only considered as the initial guideline for the prospective puppeteer. Therefore, we do not need to raise suspicions and pay attention to efforts to develop and change puppetry presentations. To what extent the development and/or change (or call it renewal) of the wayang kulit performances can provide nuances that can position life, especially spiritual life (1995, p.87).

The above developments in the wayang kulit performances also hit the *gara-gara* scene. Precisely in this scene the development looks very prominent compared to developments in other scenes such as *jejeran*, *paseban jawi*, *perang gagal*, etc. The development of the *gara-gara* scene includes various elements of the *garap* in the *pakeliran*. It is for this reason that we discuss the development of the *gara-gara* scene can be seen from the performances of several puppeteers below.

3.2.1. The Development of the *Gara-gara* Scene by Ki Anom Suroto

In the *gara-gara* scene, Anom Suroto has a special characteristic and gives birth to a new breath. Changes in pocapan or narration in the form of purwakanthi are a special characteristic of Anom Suroto in the *gara-gara* scene. To enliven the performances, he often presents comedians and singers, such as Kirun, Waljinah, and Yati Pesek. This comedian has interesting and funny dialogue. In addition, there is also a choice of listeners. The dalang reads one by one the song request letters from the listeners or spectators. Requests for this song are usually accompanied by a pack of cigarettes or in cash. The duration used to present *gara-gara* is the longest among the other puppeteers, between two and three hours. Many of the criticisms leveled at Anom Suroto were considered to be too excited in keeping with the tastes of the masses (audience). The contents of the dialogue always refer to trending development messages, both popularized by the government and promoted in the areas where the wayang performances are being held. In addition, the content of the dialogue is in the form of criticism of the public or officials who commit acts of fraud or acts that violate norms. He criticized the younger generation for speeding on the highway, not obeying traffic rules, drunkenness on the highway, fights and drug use. Likewise, Anom Suroto often criticizes officials who are not available during official hours, commit acts of corruption, commit illegal levies or commit other forms of fraud.

Anom Suroto has more songs or gending performed in the *gara-gara* scene than Nartosabdo or other puppeteers. He performed not only Javanese songs, including styles, but also regional songs such as: *Angin Mamiri, Soleram Enjot-enjotan, Lembe-lembe*, etc. Apart from that, sometimes Indonesian pop songs are also performed.

3.2.2. The Development of the *Gara-gara* Scene by Ki Warseno Slenk.

In the mid-1990s, when Warseno Slenk joined Jaleno, he included several musical instruments (non gamelan) as a means of support in his performances, especially in the *gara-gara* scene. Musical instruments used include keyboards, drums, electric bass guitar and rhythm guitar. This musical instrument presents songs arranged by *Jaleno*, such as *Madu dan Racun, Mabuk Judi, Besi Tua, Wong Ndonya, Sawan Kamahina, and Joged India*. Apart from that, it is also used to present songs of various styles, for example: *Kangen, Nyidhamsari, Caping Gunung, Ngimpi, Ali-Ali*, etc. Therefore, Warseno Slenk in his performances always involves two to three singers to appear in the *gara-gara* scene, supporting the presentation and serving the fans' requests (Sarwanto, 2009, pp.27-28).

Apart from that, Ki Warseno Slenk often makes allusions to societal events and emphasizes on aspects of humor and entertainment (especially in the *gara-gara* scenes). In other words, success in this scene can be measured by the frequent display of dialogue that can provoke the audience's laughter. According to Ki Warseno Slenk's confession, to attract the audience's sympathy, he must control the responders and the audience, so they are impressed by the presentation. The way he has to try to get along with the responder (sponsor), the audience, and the officials who are present to witness his pakeliran. In addition, he tries to make them feel at home following his performance by involving them in singing their favorite songs (Interview, October 30, 2009).

Likewise, he always instills influence (authority) in society, among others by giving souvenirs or tali asih to the audience or responders, usually in the form of puppets, cigarettes or money. As Ki Warseno Slenk often does in every *gara-gara* scene in his shadow puppet performances. Efforts to share gifts in the form of money, as was done by Ki Warseno Slenk, are meant to impress the audience with the kindness of the puppeteer, that each dalang gets money for song requests from the audience, this money is returned or donated to the audience or the public with various purposes. For example, Ki Warseno Slenk once gave song requests to *sinoman* (food server in a certain event) youths to be used to buy uniforms. According to Kartodirdjo, et al., the act of giving and returning services is a reciprocal principle. In general, this principle adheres to the debt and credit system. In this regard, each person concerned must have sensitivity to provide services or gifts to each other as much as possible (1988, p.10).

3.2.3. The Development of the *Gara-gara* Scene by the Late Ki Enthus Susmana

When the New Order regime collapsed and was replaced by a transitional government which also started the Reform Order in mid-1998, Indonesia was hit by a prolonged crisis. As a result, the world of puppetry seemed to have lost its prestige. Popular puppeteers such as Ki Anom Suroto and Ki Manteb Soedharsono, who during the New Order era were recorded as record-breakers for puppetry performances, then in the early 2000s, the number of job performances on stage decreased. However, Ki Enthus Susmono, a puppeteer from the north coast, namely Tegal Regency, has started to receive a warm welcome, especially from the wayang fans community. The mass media, both local and national, wrote much lot about Enthus Susmono in the form of news, profiles, or opinions about his performances. One of the mass media in Central Java always reported on the success of the Enthus Susmono performance, which was attended by no less than 4,000 spectators (Suara Merdeka, 1 May 2000).

As it is known, Enthus Susmono's *pakeliran* has different characteristics from the common practice. The stage for performances accommodates *pakeliran* equipment and acts as an arena for theatrical performances of singers, dancers, comedians and puppeteers. This means that wayang performances are not only focused on the screen but also on the attractions and/or artists' interactions. In the *gara-gara* scene, he does not hesitate to sing or give speeches while standing in the arena to the right of the puppeteer's stage (Sugeng Nugroho, 2003, pp.2-3).

Likewise, during the *ginem* or dialogues of the *panakawan* characters, he always uses language that tends to be straightforward, assertive, and critical, not colored by archaic words, but more communicative. He does not only use everyday language but also Indonesian, Arabic, and even often uses contemporary terms, such as the House of Representatives of the Wayang, the State of the Republic of Ngamarta, and so on, which are not commonly used in the world of puppetry. One thing that characterizes Enthus Susmono's use is that he often inserts arguments from the Qur'an and uses pornographic, obscene, and abusive words. This style of Enthus Susmono's performance often invites controversy among puppeteers. Many observers of wayang assess Enthus Susmono's creativity as having different origins, origins deviating, origins being lively, origins funny, origins astounding, and origins are random (Murtiyoso in Solo Pos, 26 August 2001; and Sugeng Nugroho, 2003, p.4).

In every presentation of Enthus Susmono's *pakeliran*, if you observe it starting from *jejer* to *tanceb kayon*, most of the spectators feel comfortable and happy watching it. He always packs his dishes into one-of-a-kind packaged art forms for urban society (kitch art). According to Umar Kayam, as quoted by Susanto Pudjomartono, kitch art has four requirements: tricks, gimmicks, sex appeal, and glamor (1984, p.51). Serving Enthus Susmono, tricks are clearly seen in the wayang (*sabet*) movements that are always trained and prepared. Gimmicks are revealed in the production of music and lighting support. Sex appeal can be seen in the humorous dialogue of wayang porn in the *Limbuk* and *gara-gara* scenes, especially in the dialogue between the puppeteer and the singer, singer and/or comedian. Meanwhile, glamor can be observed in all stage equipment, such as wickets, screens, puppets, gamelan, and accompaniment support uniforms. I hope this kind of wayang presentation becomes a trend in the world of *pakeliran* today, leading to the form of kitch arts.

Changes or developments in scenes in shadow puppet performances may not appear by themselves, but there are reasons. The cause of the change will be observed from two sides: internal and external factors.

Internal Factors

The internal factor referred to here is the cause of the development or change in puppetry, especially in the scene, because it comes from within the artist. There are at least three internal factors. First is the artist's awareness of the deficiencies in the *gara-gara* scene. It is only fitting that from generation to generation, puppeteers and other puppeteers will evaluate past works, including the *gara-gara* scene. From this assessment, there will be the impression that there are deficiencies in the scene due to the previous generation's legacy. Therefore, they adjust the *gara-gara* presence to the circumstances of their era. Second, change can only occur if the puppeteers who carry out the change have artistic abilities within themselves. Third, another internal factor that is no less important is the desire of each individual to be appreciated by the public and among the puppeteers.

External Factors

The external factors driving the changes in the *gara-gara* scene are as follows. First, there is influence from using other styles of *pakeliran*, other types of *pakeliran*, and/or art from other regions. The appearance of the *gara-gara* scene, which is currently shown in almost every play, is due to the influence of the Yogyakarta style. The use of *pelog gamelan* is possible because of the influence of *wayang gedhog* or *wayang middle*. Likewise, the addition of various gamelan instruments was due to the influence of the development of electronic music. Second, the audience's request for songs from the puppeteer presenting a scene is one of the challenges for the puppeteer. Therefore, to seek sympathy from the audience, the puppeteer will perform songs according to the audience's taste. Third, the government's programs, especially in disseminating developmental messages, also more or less influence the puppeteers in composing new songs and dialogues that breathe development in the *gara-gara* scenes. Fourth, the intense competition in the life of puppeteers influences them to make various breakthroughs so that they are in demand by the public. Steps taken include guest stars such as comedians, singers, dancers, and electronic music in the *gara-gara* scene.

3.3. Gara-gara Scene Function

The *gara-gara* scene in the shadow puppet (*wayang kulit*) performances, both covertly and directly, is related to the people's social life, because the *gara-gara* scene in the shadow puppet performances is one of the cultural products of society, which of course has a function for people's lives. As a basis for uncovering the function of the *gara-gara* scene, it is necessary first to understand the definition of "function" itself. According to Sarwanto, the word "function" in a language is used with different meanings according to the context. It often happens that

each scientific discipline uses the word "function" in a more specific sense according to the needs of the science itself (2007, p.30). Therefore, the word "function" here needs to be emphasized to be used in to explain the use relationship between something and a certain purpose. Something is said to function if it can be used as a tool or means to achieve goals (Spiro in Koentjaraningrat, 1983: p.215).

3.3.1. Communication Function

Judging from the relationship between the puppeteer and the audience, the *gara-gara* scene functions as a means of communication. Thus, the scene of *gara-gara* can be observed from two sides, namely from the puppeteer as a communicator and from the audience as an interpreter or a communicant.

As a means of communication, the puppeteer is the main source of conveying something to the audience or adherents. In accordance with the specific function of communication, namely to achieve communication that is harmonious, beneficial, and can improve human life and dignity, the functions and duties of the communication media always have a close relationship with the goals to be achieved (Susanto, 1977, p.45). Thus, the message of the *gara-gara* scene in the wayang kulit performances for the *dalang* is a means of conveying the *dalang*'s message to the audience. The goal to be achieved so that the message can be captured, understood, or felt by the audience.

According to Susanto, in the communication process, the communication media for the communicant (audience) has four kinds of functions: (1) as a means of learning what is heard by taking into account the pros and cons; (2) indirectly through communication media, the communicant will acquire various knowledge and skills about life; (3) through means of communication, communicants can enjoy entertainment, so they can forget the problems they are facing; and (4) from the means of communication, the communicant can make decisions to act in accordance with societal norms. From these four functions, the communication media for communicants are more individual, because they only apply to each person personally (Susanto, 1977, p.46).

As we all know, it is hoped that the *gara-gara* scene is expected always to contain guidance and spectacle. Therefore, this scene is expected to reveal various things about life's problems through *panakawan* characters, both known and unknown by the audience, especially things that are not yet known and can not be directly used as material for the audience to study and consider. Various things like that, especially those related to life's problems, at least will enrich the audience's soul experience so that it will indirectly increase their skills.

3.3.2. Education Function

The *gara-gara* scene in the shadow puppet performances contains cultural values that can guide for the supporting community. The cultural values they contain can be messages of moral education so that they can influence people's views on good things in the life of the people of the state and nation.

The *gara-gara* scene in a shadow puppet performance is considered successful if the functions are balanced, meaning neither stands out. *Tuntunan* leads to a pedagogical (educational) function, while *tontonan* points to its function as a work of art (aesthetic). The message of moral education presented by the puppeteer in the wayang kulit performances can be seen or reflected in the *gara-gara* scene.

3.3.3. Entertainment Function

Apart from being a function of communication and education, the *gara-gara* scene in a shadow puppet performance functions as entertainment for the local community or the surroundings where the performance is held. Many present spectators watch the shadow puppet performances, especially in the *gara-gara* or *Limbuk* scenes. Spectators who witness, apart from local community members, also people from outside the village, even spectators from outside the city who are present to watch the *gara-gara* scene, especially if the mastermind is their idol, such as Ki Anom Suroto, Ki Enthus Susmana (late), Ki Warsena Slenk, and Ki Seno Nugroho (late). They generally look for entertainment, so with this entertainment, they can let go of the routine of life, forget the problems they are facing, and have a certain satisfaction.

As entertainment, the *gara-gara* scene is a trending scene in today's shadow puppet performances. There is a tendency in the *gara-gara* scene to emphasize more elements of entertainment, even the form of having much fun. This can be observed in the presence of guest stars (singers), performances of pop songs, and mixed songs, along with non-gamelan musical instruments. Success in the *gara-gara* scene can be measured by the frequent display of dialogue that can make the audience laugh. The tendency of the puppeteers in each of their performances is always to be more familiar with the audience. This is in accordance with Clara van Groenendael's statement that the people who watch the shadow puppet performances hope that the show will be liked and surrounded by many people. The hope of finding entertainment and friends is the main attraction of wayang performances for the average viewer. Therefore, many puppeteers often emphasize on the entertainment aspect of their performances (1987, p.188).

3.3.4. Da'wah Media Functions

The *gara-gara* scene in shadow puppet performances can function as a medium of da'wah for the santri. Apart from that, students in their daily study of religion need to get artistic references to provide their mental balance and personality. Apart from being proficient in religion, the students need to be provided with entertainment and teaching morals packaged in wayang kulit performances through *gara-gara* scenes. This is a way that in educating students it is necessary to approach cultural arts. Wayang art is an alternative to entertain and foster humor and sensitivity to local wisdom values to form a complete personality for the students.

The delivery of entertainment and moral lessons is packaged in wayang *gara-gara* performances. This packaging model was created in a light and attractive form of performance for the students. Even this packaging model provides an opportunity for students to get involved in wayang *gara-gara* performances. The power of improvisation and humor have contributed to the students for future provisions when preaching in society. This also inspires the students to prepare for mastery of religious material combined with the art of humor and improvisation to attract the attention of the congregation.



Picture 3. The Gara-gara scene is presented by Sarwanto (puppeteer)
(Photo: Sunardi, 2022)

4. Conclusions

The *gara-gara* scene was originally only presented in shadow puppet performances in which there were scenes of knights in meditation. In this case, the *gara-gara* scene supports the ascetic knight scene. In its current development, the *gara-gara* scene is presented in every play, whether there are scenes of ascetic knights or not. This is the cause of the change in the function of the *gara-gara* scene because this scene features a *panakawan* character, one of whom is tasked with comforting the knights he follows when they are sad and to convey a certain message. In addition, the *gara-gara* scene is also a means of creativity for the puppeteer in conveying the narrative in the form of *purwakanthi*, direct, firm, communicative, and critical dialogue, humor that is interesting and makes the audience laugh, as well as new pieces or songs created by the puppeteer.

The development of the *gara-gara* scene can be tracked through two factors: internal factors and external factors. Internal factors can be seen in the artist's awareness of the deficiencies in the *gara-gara* scene, the artist's willingness to create, and the artist's desire to receive appreciation in the form of sympathy or financial. The external factors encourage changes in the scene due to, among other things, the influence of other styles and forms of art, government development programs, audience requests and intense competition among puppeteers.

The *gara-gara* scene in the shadow puppet performances has several functions: the function of communication, the function of education, and the function of entertainment. The function of communication is communication between the puppeteer as the main source who conveys something (message) to the audience or adherents who witness the *gara-gara* scene in the wayang kulit performances. The function of education, namely the *gara-gara* scene in wayang kulit performance is not only as an interesting spectacle, but deeper as a guide and order that is expected to function as a role model, because it contains values that are meaningful for life. The function of entertainment is that the *gara-gara* scene in a wayang kulit performance can provide spectacle, entertainment, pleasure, and soul satisfaction to the audience, so that they can let go of the routine of life and forget about the problems they face. Its function as a propaganda medium is that the *gara-gara* scene in a shadow puppet performance can be used as a teaching of manners for the students, which is packaged in a wayang performance.

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