

# SERAT MENYURI: ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTION FOR THE KASEPUHAN KEJAWEN KALITANJUNG INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY

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## Abstract

This study aims to describe the social function of the Serat Manyuri Javanese manuscript for the Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung community in Tambaknagara, Rawalo, Banyumas Regency. This research is categorized as qualitative research. Data were collected through library research and interviews. The data were then analyzed using traditional philological methods, including determining the research focus, manuscript inventory, preliminary observation, and manuscript transcription. Based on the conducted research, several conclusions can be drawn. The moral values in the Serat Manyuri Javanese Manuscript remain relevant to the Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung community, who are the cultural custodians of this tradition. The traditions practiced by the Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung community that are related to the use of the Serat Manyuri include: 1) Selametan Kematian Telung Dina lan Pitung Dina Traditions ; 2) Selametan Matang Puluh Dina lan Nyatus Tradition; and 3) Selamten Mendhak Pisan, Pindho, lan Nyewu Traditions. The Serat Manyuri is one of the ancient Javanese manuscripts found in Banyumas, containing numerous moral values that continue to be utilized by the community as a medium in the implementation of traditional ceremonies.

**Keywords:** *Philology, Serat Manyuri, Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung Indigenous Community*

## 1. Introduction

The Javanese community has a rich culture with great value, and various cultural heritage items can be found in different forms. The surviving cultural heritage of Java includes intangible legacies such as sacred sites and temples, as well as written legacies in the form of manuscripts. All of these forms of cultural heritage have become an essential part of the Javanese identity and continue to be preserved to this day. One of the most prominent aspects of Javanese culture is literary works in the form of Javanese manuscripts. These manuscripts can serve as rich research material, through which we can explore the language used, the literary values contained within them, and the messages they convey. These manuscripts are an integral part of the culture passed down from generation to generation (Baroroh-Baried, 1985: 9-10).

Javanese manuscripts are written legacies, most of which are in Javanese script or Arabic Pegan script. Some manuscripts have also been transcribed into the Latin alphabet. According to Hairudin (2008), despite the vast number of Javanese manuscripts, many of them are still preserved in their original form, either in national or private libraries and museums. Javanese manuscripts are written legacies, most of which are in Javanese script or Arabic Pegan script. Some manuscripts have also been transcribed into the Latin alphabet. According to Hairudin (2008), despite the vast number of Javanese manuscripts, many of them are still preserved in their original form, either in national or private libraries and museums.

In addition to manuscripts stored in institutions such as libraries and museums, there are still manuscripts kept by individuals, particularly in rural areas. These privately held manuscripts are largely inaccessible to researchers due to difficulty in reaching them. As a result, research on these manuscripts remains quite limited. These manuscripts have a wide range of benefits and can be utilized by anyone from various backgrounds and academic disciplines, depending on the content of the manuscript. For example, ancient manuscripts that are old or damaged may be challenging to use in research due to their deteriorating physical condition. If research is solely reliant on oral information from informants, it becomes even harder to obtain accurate details, especially since those informants may no longer be available. For this reason, preserving manuscripts becomes crucial so that the values contained within them can be safeguarded and passed on to future generations. Subroto (2012) argues that to

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preserve these manuscripts, research must be conducted to translate and protect them from further deterioration. Research on these manuscripts typically uses the discipline of philology. Philology is the study of ancient texts through a systematic and structured approach. According to Santoso (2021), philological research involves several stages, such as manuscript inventory, manuscript description, text reading, text editing, translation, and interpretation (Suryadi, 2011). One of the primary goals of philological research is to uncover and understand the content of these manuscripts. Text interpretation plays a crucial role in revealing the moral teachings embedded in the manuscripts and disseminating them to future generations. For example, the *Serat Manyuri* manuscript, kept by the Kejawèn Kasépuhan Kalitanjung indigenous community, contains life teachings that remain relevant and are still applied by the local community today. This manuscript is important to study so that this cultural heritage can continue to be preserved and passed on.

### 1.1. Research Questions

The question of this article is what the social function of the *Serat Menyuri* for Masyarakat Adat Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung?

## 2. Review of Literature

Filology comes from the Greek word *philologia*, which is a combination of *philos*, meaning 'friend', and *logos*, meaning 'speech' or 'knowledge' (Susanto, 2010). In Greek, *philologia* originally meant 'fond of speaking', which later evolved to mean 'fond of learning', 'fond of knowledge', and ultimately 'fond of high-value writings' such as literary works (Baried, 1994:3). The term *philologia* also has roots in Latin, where *philos* means love, and *logos* means word. Thus, filology literally translates to 'love of words' (Djamaris, 1977:21). Over time, the concept of filology expanded from an appreciation for words to a broader fascination with scholarly texts and literature. This broader definition highlights filology as not just an interest in language, but a passion for understanding written culture and its significance.

Filology is the study of language, culture, institutions, and the history of a nation (KBBI, 1997: 227). The idea of filology, meaning love for words, has further evolved into a love for knowledge. Filology is not limited to text criticism or commentary; it also explores the cultural backdrop of a nation through its manuscripts (Setyawan, 2018). The focus of this discipline is on manuscripts and texts, and from philological research, one can uncover the cultural context that produced a literary work, such as beliefs, customs, and worldviews of a nation. According to the Kamus Istilah Filologi (1977: 27), filology is defined as "the study of the spiritual development of a nation and its particularities, or the study of culture based on language and literature." Djamaris (1977: 20) provides a more specific definition of filology, emphasizing its focus on ancient manuscripts.

Filology can be understood as a discipline that specifically investigates ancient manuscripts. Based on the aforementioned perspectives, filology can be broadly defined as the study of the cultural development of a nation, including language, literature, and the arts. This development is examined through the cultural products of past civilizations, specifically ancient manuscripts, which are then researched, analyzed, interpreted, and understood. The various definitions of filology above illustrate the wide-ranging scope of its analytical approach, encompassing the study of cultural history through written texts. In this way, filology not only preserves ancient knowledge but also helps us understand the broader context of human development across time.

## 3. Methods

Research methodology refers to the approach used to carry out scientific research in order to discover and uncover the truth in knowledge that can be accounted for (Hadi, 1989: 3). According to Surakhmad (1980: 121), "method is the primary way used to achieve a goal, such as testing a series of hypotheses using certain techniques and tools." Meanwhile, Muhamdijir (1990: 10) explains that "research methodology provides technical details on the methods used in a study." From these views, it can be concluded that research methodology involves activities conducted in scientific research to test truths and solve the problems encountered during the research process.

This study uses two research methods: descriptive method and philological method. The descriptive method is employed to search for and uncover as much knowledge as possible from the content of the manuscript being studied (Prasetyo, 2015). Broadly speaking, the steps in the descriptive method for this research include describing the physical condition of the manuscript, analyzing the intrinsic elements of the manuscript (non-physical elements), transliteration (diplomatic, limited orthography), and translating the text. The philological method, on the other hand, is used to reveal and describe the subject of the research, which is the manuscript (Sugiyanto, 2018). This research utilizes the philological method of single manuscript study with a standard edition approach.

The standard edition approach within the philological method aims to correct and refine the text, ensuring it is free from errors and deviations that may arise during the writing process. The goal of producing a standard edition is to create a new version of the manuscript that is accurate and aligned with the current progress and development of society. By doing so, the research ensures that the text is faithfully preserved and made relevant to contemporary understanding, allowing it to be accessed and utilized by future generations. This method not only enhances the manuscript's readability but also ensures its scholarly value for future study.

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

The philological research of the *Serat Manyuri* manuscript in Banyumas is crucial for the preservation and deeper understanding of the region's local cultural heritage. The manuscript is a vital piece of Banyumas' cultural wealth, a region with a rich history and strong traditions. Through philological analysis, we can uncover and document the linguistic, literary, and historical dimensions embedded in the text (Fauzi, 2018). This research enhances our understanding of the evolution of the Javanese language and the literary richness contained within the manuscript. Additionally, it plays an important role in preserving and documenting Banyumas' cultural heritage for future generations. Moreover, it provides insights into the social dynamics and everyday life of the people of Banyumas in the past.

Studying the *Serat Manyuri* offers a glimpse into the past, reflecting the norms, values, and local wisdom embedded in the daily lives of its people. This philological analysis not only aids in the preservation of the manuscript but also provides a deeper understanding of the cultural and social context of the region. The findings from this research can be invaluable for future generations, ensuring that the region's heritage is appreciated and preserved. Ultimately, this study plays a vital role in safeguarding and sustaining the cultural identity and legacy of Banyumas for years to come.

Filological analysis can open doors to understanding linguistic shifts, social changes, and the development of literature within a community over time (Purwanto, 2020). Thus, this research not only responds to the call for preserving cultural heritage but also aims to contribute scientifically to the ongoing understanding of local history and culture. Moreover, the philological study of the *Serat Manyuri* can positively impact the revitalization and renewal of local culture. By gaining a better understanding of this manuscript, the people of Banyumas can rediscover the traditional values embedded within it. This deeper comprehension allows the community to reinforce their cultural identity and reconnect with practices that may have been neglected or forgotten. In this way, the study not only serves as a means of preserving the past but also of breathing new life into cultural traditions.

By understanding and appreciating the *Serat Manyuri*, the community can strengthen their cultural roots and revitalize cultural practices that are in danger of fading away. This effort can provide a solid foundation for future preservation of local heritage, ensuring that the values and traditions continue to thrive. Filological research, therefore, is not just about safeguarding the past but also about encouraging the continuation and revitalization of culture in the future. This research encourages a deeper appreciation of the cultural heritage, fostering a sense of pride and continuity among the people. It ultimately helps ensure that local cultural practices are preserved and passed on to future generations, contributing to the sustainability of the region's identity. Thus, the impact of philological research extends beyond academic exploration, becoming a catalyst for cultural growth and preservation.

This study is classified as a philological research. The object of this research is the *Serat Manyuri* manuscript. The next step of the research involved conducting interviews with the community of the Kejawen Kasepuhan traditional village in Rawali Subdistrict, Banyumas Regency. Before collecting data in the field, the research team first transcribed the *Serat Manyuri* manuscript, which was written in Javanese script. After the transcription and transliteration process, interviews were then conducted with the community members of Kasepuhan Kalitanjung. The local community warmly welcomed the research, offering their assistance with the technical aspects of data collection.

The transliteration of the manuscript, the survey, and initial coordination regarding the research plan with the Kejawen Kasepuhan community were carried out as part of the preparatory work. The community's openness and support were crucial for the success of the research activities. Documentation related to the transliteration of the manuscript, as well as initial surveys and coordination efforts with the traditional community, can be found in Figure 1. This collaboration ensured that the research process was aligned with the local customs and that the data collection was done effectively. The community's involvement was integral to facilitating a smooth and respectful research process.



Figure 1. Documentation of Research Activity Interviews

The data collection process in this study was carried out through three main activities: the transcription of the Javanese-script manuscript, in-depth interviews with the head and prominent figures of the Kejawen Kasepuhan community, and observations during traditional ritual ceremonies. The transcription of the \*Serat Manyuri\* manuscript began in May 2024. The data collection through interviews and direct observations took place in July 2024. The research team, including lecturers, were directly involved in the data collection process, especially for the interviews with traditional leaders and the observation of rituals and ceremonies. The total number of respondents in this study was 20 individuals. Overall, the data collection process proceeded smoothly and met the established targets.

During the data collection phase, the research team focused on gathering both written and verbal information that would enrich the study's findings. The interviews allowed for a deeper understanding of the community's customs, beliefs, and historical context, while the direct observation of traditional rituals provided insight into the living practices of the Kejawen Kasepuhan people. This combination of methods ensured a comprehensive approach to data gathering. The involvement of the research team in every stage of data collection helped ensure accuracy and reliability in the findings. With all activities proceeding as planned, the study was able to achieve its objectives effectively.

## 5. Conclusion

The moral values in the Serat Manyuri Javanese Manuscript remain relevant to the Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung community, who are the cultural custodians of this tradition. The traditions practiced by the Kejawen Kasepuhan Kalitanjung community that are related to the use of the Serat Manyuri include: 1) Selametan Kematian Telung Dina lan Pitung Dina Traditions ; 2) Selametan Matang Puluh Dina lan Nyatus Tradition; and 3) Selamten Mendhak Pisan, Pindho, lan Nyewu Traditions. The Serat Manyuri is one of the ancient Javanese manuscripts found in Banyumas, containing numerous moral values that continue to be utilized by the community as a medium in the implementation of traditional ceremonies

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