

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

In this chapter, the writer provides her interpretation and analysis. The analysis is based on the problem formulations which are concerned with the conditions or requirements for the *Reog* performers to get possessed, and the things the dancers experience (feel, see, do) during the possession. In order to answer the research questions, the writer applied a qualitative method by interviewing two male *Reog* performers (Mr. A and Mr. Z), Mr. Sutrimo as the shaman, Mr. Hendy as musician and Mr. Suyadi. In order to make this research easy to understand, the writer also added some pictures. In addition to the interviews, the writer also uses the documentation of the performance of *Reog* Siswo Sari Utomo to complete the data.

In *Reog* performance, possession is what audiences are waiting for. The event of possession is the main attraction of the performance. In *Reog*, there are some requirements that most people do not know to get possessed. These requirements have to be fulfilled so that the performance can be held perfectly.

#### **4.1 Requirements to Get Possessed**

In *Reog* performance, the audience will get to see two parts of the performance. According to Nugroho (2018), the first dance is called *jaran kepang* dance or *Jathilan*, the performers are some children who dance and act like

Ganongan. The second dance is the core performance when all the *Reog* performers take part. It is a part of the performance when they will get possessed. This part is the most important part in *Reog* performance and what the viewers or audiences want to see the most. The interviews reveal that some requirements need to be met for the performance especially when it involves the condition of being possessed such as fasting, staying awake overnight, having a shaman, the music, and also preparing flowers or incense.

#### **4.1.1 Fasting**

People might not know that there are some requirements that the *Reog* performers need to do in order to be able to get into possessed. In fact, before the *Reog* performance there is a specific ritual that the performers need to do. As Mr. Sutrimo explained that “*Biasanya sebelum tampil itu ada yang namanya puasa putih*” [Before performing, they usually do white fasting]. (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in November 2019). Mr. A, a *Reog* performer who usually gets into possessed, added that he usually does fasting and does not sleep a day before the performance day. The term fasting in *Reog* performance is different from the term fasting from people usually do during Moslem fasting month, Ramadhan. Generally, Moslems who do fasting will eat and drink nothing from 4 A.M to 6 P.M. The term, fasting, in *Reog* means that the performers and shaman will not eat or drink nothing, except rice and mineral water, one day before the performance. The fasting starts by the time they wake up until the day of the *Reog* performance. The term fasting in

*Reog* is often called as *Puasa Mutih* (white fasting). In order to find the differences in *Puasa Mutih* and fasting during Ramadhan, the writer interviewed Mr. Suyadi. According to Mr. Suyadi, there are some differences between *Puasa Mutih* and fasting during Ramadhan based on the purpose and also the duration of the fasting.

The purpose of *Puasa Mutih* is to ask God to grant personal wishes while the purpose of fasting in Ramadhan month is to get the redemption of the sins. He stated, “*Nek Poso Mutih jalukane karo Gusti Allah biasane urusan pribadi, nak sing poso umum kui nggo nggugurke dosane*” [During *Puasa Mutih*, people usually ask God to grant personal wishes while the general fasting is to wash away their sins] (Interview with Mr. Suyadi in December 2019). The reason for *Puasa Mutih* as what Mr. Sutrimo stated is *Puasa Mutih* for cleansing oneself and asking God to grant personal wishes before and during the performance. One of the most common wishes they ask for is the safety of the group during the *Reog* performance from the evil spirit. He stated that “*keselamatan group dari yang apa dari jin, dari roh halus, dari danyang, dari perbuatan orang lain itu kan ada yang sirik. Ada apa ada yang mbuat biar nda bisa sembuh atau nda bisa nganu tu ada*” [The safety of the group from the ghost, evil spirit, and from those envious people or those who make (us) not able to heal or get possessed] (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in November 2019). Thus, the performers need to do this fasting to “ensure” the safety of the group during the performance.

In general, *Puasa Mutih* is done to ask for certain wishes and cleansing oneself. In terms of duration of *Puasa Mutih* and Ramadhan’s fasting are different as

well. Puasa Mutih lasts for a day until the day of the performance, while fasting in Ramadhan's usually lasts for a month. Mr. Suyadi added, "*Nek Poso Mutih kui sedino tapi nek seng posone Islam sasi Ramadhan tutup sebulan*" [Puasa Mutih lasts for a day while the fasting in Ramadhan needs to be done for the whole month] (Interview with Mr. Suyadi in December 2019).

#### **4.1.2 Staying awake overnight**

Another requirement that the performers need to fulfill before performance is staying awake overnight. During this period, the shaman and performers are also not allowed to touch anything, but just have a small talk. Mr. A said "*Sebelum hari H nggak boleh pegang apa-apa, cuma ngobrol-ngobrol doang sampai pagi sampai main*" [Before the performance day, we cannot touch anything and we usually chat overnight until the time they have to perform] (Interview with Mr. A in November 2019). It is highly believed that the rituals of staying awake overnight and not touching anything before the performance are required for the performers to get possessed. They believe that by doing those actions their body that will be used by the spirits will be clean. Cleansing oneself means that letting one's body to sense the immaterialize being (spirits), to become more sensitive to such a thing.

*“Begadang maksudnya adalah menahan rasa ngantuk di malam hari, mengorbankan waktu untuk istirahat dan menahan kebiasaan-kebiasaan pada umumnya yang dilakukan, misalnya merokok,*

*makan dengan makanan enak, menonton televisi, dan hal-hal yang sifatnya duniawi ini biasanya tidak dilakukan terlebih dulu sebelum tampil”*

[Staying awake overnight means trying to fight getting sleepy at night, sacrificing their time to sleep and their regular habits such as smoking, eating delicious food, watching TV. These things are usually avoided before they perform]. (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in December 2019).

The combinations of fasting and lack of sleep the day before the performance, make the body of the performers are easy to reach the level of fatigue. In the middle of the performance, the performer's body will be sensitive to possession since they are not fully concentrated anymore. The spirits will find a host body that is not in a state of full concentrate. The moment when the performers are not concentrated, the spirits will possess them. This is following the audience too, if the audience is not focused, they will experience possession just like the *reog* performers. When someone comes to watch *reog* performance, they supposed to be in a good mood, focus, and completely aware. Mr. Sutrimo gives a reason to grant wishes the *Reog* performers need to sacrifices themselves from doing or having the things they always do regularly. Before the performance day, the performers need to avoid their regular habits in order to cleanse themselves. Thus, by staying overnight and not doing anything, they will be able to purify their body.

### 4.1.3 Having a Shaman

Shaman is a person required to be present during a *reog* performance. Shaman has 3 functions: the leader, the trainer, and the healer. Shaman is very essential in *reog* performance because he is in charge of calling the spirits. So, when there is no shaman, there will be less possibility for the performers to get possessed in every performance. *Reog* performance without shaman is too risky since no person is in charge to protect the performers from bad things that may happen. Moreover, as a healer, when some performers get possessed, the shaman will be the one who can heal them and put them in their normal state.

A shaman has to be responsible for the safety of all group members during the performance. Mr. Sutrimo points out that “*Pawangnya pertama harus bertapa sebelum main, harus berdoa dan ngafalin mantra*” [The shaman needs to meditate himself before performing. He also needs to pray and memorize the spell] (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in November 2019). Further, he explained that this meditation will bring safety to all group members when they are performing. Mr. Sutrimo stated “*Berdoa itu untuk keselamatan grup dari jin, roh halus dan juga perbuatan orang lain yang sirik yang buat (pemain Reog) biar nggak bisa sembuh pas kesurupan*” [Praying is for the safety of the group from the evil spirit and envious people who make the *Reog* performers unable to heal during the possession] (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in November 2019). Thus, it can be concluded that the role of the shaman in *Reog* performance is very important, not only for leading the performance but also for

being responsible for the safety of the performing group. As a person who has the responsibility to lead the performance, there are some requirements a shaman needs to prepare:

#### **a. Wearing Costume**

Shamans usually wear their ritual costume. There are not many people who know there are specific attributes that both the shaman and the performers have to put on. Most people think that the attributes that the shaman and the performers have to put on are the same. In fact, the performers and the shaman wear different costumes. The performer's costume or attributes are suited to the theme while the shamans usually wear black costumes and attributes. Mr. Sutrimo said "*Biasanya untuk atribut, para pemain memakai baju yang sesuai dengan tariannya sendiri. Pakaian ini untuk tarian ini sedangkan tarian satunya pakai yang ini jadi setiap tarian beda kostum*" [For the attributes, performers will wear costumes suited to the dance. A certain costume is for a certain dance while other costumes will be worn for another dance. So, every dance has its costume.] (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in November 2019). In other words, the costume and attributes for the performers can change depending on the dance they are performing.

Meanwhile, the ritual attribute for shaman is identical to black. Black for the shaman is a color that emphasizes confidence and bravery. Mr.

Sutrimeo mentioned that black can show the personality of calmness and those who meditate tend to use the black because it gives them the feeling of calmness. During the performance, only shamans who are allowed to wear black as required in every *Reog* performance. Mr. Sutrimeo added that shamans wear black ritual attributes because they are considered having higher skill levels compared to those who wear a similar costume with the dancer random ritual attributes. In other words, black ritual costumes and attributes are signs that shaman is a senior shaman. The shaman who puts on the same costume is usually the dance trainer who when necessary can participate in the performance as a dancer.



*Fig 1: Shaman with black ritual attributes photo from Siswo Sari*





Fig 2: Shaman with Reog outfit

#### **b. Preparing Flowers or Incense**

Another requirement that needs to be prepared by the shaman are flowers, Chinese incense, and Javanese incense. Mr. Sutrimo said, “*Syarat yang harus dipersiapkan kalo mau main biasanya bunga, yongshua, menyan yang dari China yang buat roh China dan juga dupa Jawa, tergantung siapa kemasukan siapa*” [The requirements that must be prepared [by the shaman] before the performance are flowers, Chinese incense to call the spirit and Javanese incense. It depends on who will get possessed by what kind of spirit]. (Interview with Mr. Sutrimo in November 2019). For example, when the spirit that possesses the performer is a Chinese spirit, then they [the shaman] would need to use Chinese incense, and it goes the same way with the Javanese spirits.

It is an obligation to provide flowers in every *Reog* performance. It is because flowers as the invitation and food for the spirits. Flowers attract and invite the spirit to come to the performance. These flowers are a mixture of roses, Cananga flowers, and *Kantil (Michelia Alba)* flowers. In Java, these flowers are called *bunga awur* (sprinkling flowers). *Awur* (sprinkling flowers) means sprinkling the ancestor spirits who have passed away by using these flowers to attract the spirit. When the shamans do not provide flowers, the possession will not happen.

Flowers, Chinese incense, and Javanese incense should have prepared to keep the *Reog* performance under control. The reason is in some *Reog* performances there are times when the spirits do not want to get out of the bodies, an event which can harm the performers and ruin the performance.



*Fig 3: Chinese Incense*



Fig 4: Flowers (Roses, Cananga, and Kantil) and Raja Banana

#### 4.1.4 Music

In *Reog* performances, every group which is going to perform has several songs. Siswo Sari Utomo itself has a list of songs used in every performance. The songs used are mostly traditional Indonesian songs. According to Mr. Hendy, one of the musicians in Siswo Sari Utomo, the songs used in every performance are Lir ilir, Kagok Semarangan, Gambuh, Jaranan, Lewung, Dhurma, Mudo Rangsang, Manyar Sewu, and Slompret-Slompret. He also stated that Slompret-Slompret is the only song that has a powerful energy to invite the spirit. Slompret-Slompret has monotonous tempo and rhythm that rapidly continuously sounded. Slompret-Slompret is sung when the shaman gathers the *Reog* performers to begin the experience of possession. The shaman will give a code to the musician to change the music tempo to be a bit faster. The duration of Slompret-Slompret is five to seven minutes depends on how long the shaman needs to gather the *Reog* performers in the middle of the field. For

*Reog* community, Slompret-slompret is like a kind of “national anthem” because it is the only song that they have to play in order to get possessed before they play another song entitled Durmo. During the Durmo song, the *Reog* performers will begin the process of possession.

When the performers are in the state of possession, the musician will change the music into, surprisingly, dangdut music. The reason for playing dangdut in the present days, according to the interviewee, is to make sure that the performance is relaxing and enjoyable for all the audiences. In this part the *sinden*, Javanese traditional singer will be replaced by a singer that has already been hired to sing one or two modern songs. Then the music will be back into the serious mode. Finally the musician will play Manyar Sewu song in order to end the performance and to recover the performers from being possessed. This song has a similar tempo and also rhythm with Slompret-Slompret. The music instruments mostly played in Durma are bonang, gong, and gendang while in Slompret-Slompret is gamelan. The closing part will be conducted by the shaman who heals the possessed performers one by one in order to have the complete recovery. The musician will repeatedly play the music until all of the *reog* performers completely regain their consciousness.

#### **4.2 What and How the Dancers Feel, See and Do During the Possession**

In *Reog* performances, the part when the performers are getting possessed is what the audiences are waiting for. The writer had some interviews with the *Reog* performers in order to find out what the dancers feel, see, and also do during the

possession. The writer interviewed 2 *Reog* performers; one of them is the *Reog* performer that usually gets into possession. The other one is a *Reog* performer that rarely gets possessed. They mentioned that there are two types of possessions which usually happen during the *Reog* performances: the genuine possession and the *made up* possession.

Before experiencing the possession part, the shaman will gather all the *Reog* performers in the middle of the field. He will give a code to the musician to change the music tempo to be a little bit faster. In this part, the shaman will remove the performers' accessories which are easily broken during the possession such as necklace, bracelet, earrings, or even Javanese dagger (*keris*). By the time the shaman sprinkles *bunga awur*, flowers, which have been caster a spell before, the *Reog* performers will fall one by one on the ground and the possession happens.



*Fig 5: Shaman gathers the Reog performers before the possession event*



Fig 6: *Reog* performers start to fall over and get into possession

There are two kinds of possessions in reog performance, genuine possession and made up possession. The performers who experience the genuine possession will experience tremble, cramp, and will not remember anything because they will lose consciousness. Meanwhile, the performers who experience made-up possession have to pretend that they are possessed and act hilariously to entertain the audience. The writer is going to discuss the three broad categories of genuine possession and made up possession experienced by *Reog* performers. The first one is what they feel, the second is what they see, and the last one is what they do during the possession.

#### 4.2.1 Genuine Possession

In *Reog* performance, there is a possession called *ndadhi* or genuine possession. This possession is what the audience waiting for and the main show of the performance. Different from the made up possession, genuine possession characteristics is violence and sometimes the performers hurt himself. Here are the three broad categories of genuine possession:

##### a. How the Dancers Feel

The writer interviewed *Reog* performer in order to find what they feel during the possession. The *Reog* performer often attempts to prevent himself from getting possessed, but by hearing the sound of gamelan music, he can't help but fall into this unconscious state. This statement is supported by Mr. A who said, "*Soalnya itu ada suara-suara Reog atau gamelan yang masuk ke pikiran saya berulang-ulang*" [Because there was a *Reog* or gamelan sound that gets in my mind repeatedly] (Interview with Mr. A in November 2019). He cannot get rid of the voice that keeps on playing in his mind. When it happens, he feels that his body starts to move uncontrollably. He added, "*Biasanya saya langsung ndredeg, kram, dan langsung ndak ingat apa-apa*" [I am usually shaking, experience cramp and can not remember anything] (Interview with Mr. A in November 2019). Once Mr. A comes into

sense and able to control himself, he becomes exhausted and his body was in pain, especially in his head. He explained that the effects of being possessed are that he feels dizzy and feels exhausted.

#### **b. What the Dancers See**

In terms of what they see, Mr. A also added that he is unable to see anything right after the possession. From the observation that the writer did, Mr. A cannot sense what is happening to him. He cannot feel and remember anything that happens during the performance. All turns into black and at this moment he loses control of himself. During this state of losing control, he is unable to see anything. However, he feels that his sense of hearing gets sharpened especially to tune in to the music. This condition of having no control of oneself is supported by Winarsih (2010) pointing out that one of the characteristics of being in genuine possession is that the *Reog* performers lose control of themselves.

#### **c. What the Dancers Do**

When the performers are possessed, the shaman will observe them closely to make sure that they do not do something risky and dangerous. During the possession, *Reog* performers usually dance uncontrollably, do some attractions or just stay still. It also proves the theory of



possession stated by (Dobbin & Hezel, 1996) as cited by Cohen (2008) who mentioned that possession is a condition when a spirit has taken control bodily and/or mental functions of the human host.

When the *Reog* performers stay still, the shaman needs to provoke them to dance or do attractions. It is done to avoid disappointments from the audiences. During the possession, the *reog* performers start to fall, dance aggressively, and do dangerous things. Mr. A mentioned that he dances aggressively, he cries, gets angry without reasons, and he asks his head to be hit by using roof tiles.



*Fig 7: Reog performers fall on the ground after experience tremble and cramp*



*Fig 8: A shaman assistant is helping the Reog performers who got possessed to get up*

Mr. A informed that “*aku ada rekaman pas aku dipukul pake genteng 20 biji dan pas sudah selesai baru kerasa. Kepala jadi pusing dan badannya capek*” [I have a recording when I was hit by 20 roof tiles and when it ends my head became dizzy and my body was drained] (Interview with Mr. A in November 2019). Furthermore, after he got possessed, there was a spirit in the form of a white tiger that becomes his shield. Mr. A's will start crawling, growling, and then make his body posture look-like a tiger. This tiger spirit is interested in *Reog* performances. When there is music that the tiger spirit likes being played, he will come and possessed Mr. A. Afterwards, Mr. A's will feel pain in his body, and he will start experience tremble and cramp.



*Fig 9: Reog performers got possessed and lost control*



*Fig 10: The shaman's assistant is bringing a whip as propertie of performance*



*Fig 11: Reog performer who drinks water from the bunga awur*

#### 4.2.2 *Made up Possession*

In *Reog* performance, there is also possession that is set up for the sake of entertainment. It is called as *ndadi-ndadi-nan* (made up possession). This possession is not a genuine. This possession is different from the genuine possession because it has no characteristics of violence but it attracts laughter from the audience, because the performers acting like women, giving out food from the host, and even asking for food to the food seller. The *made up* possession aims to entertain the audience and makes the performance amusing and enjoyable to watch.

##### a. **What the Dancers Feel**

In terms of what they feel, Mr. Z talked about his experience in doing the *made up* possession. He said that the performers who will do the *made up* possession will have funny make up such as clown, Gareng or Petruk, a *punakawan* figure in Javanese puppet, and make up like a woman. He feels uncomfortable to dance in public with such make up cause it will make him look like a fool. In addition, he also feels that he is uncomfortable because he has to do something hilarious to attract the audience to laugh. In order to make the *Reog* performers have self-confidence they usually ask an offer, kind of something to drink to be prepared before the performance. Mr. Z told

the writer to not write down what kind of the offering that he mentioned in the interview cause he is afraid that his answer will harm other *reog* communities. This is a drink that will boost their mood and energy so they can enjoy the performance.

#### **b. What the Dancers See**

For the *Reog* performer that does the *made up* possession, they are fully aware of the audience's presence. The *Reog* performer will still be able to see the audiences and make some interactions with them and even the performers ask for food to the food seller.

#### **c. What the Dancers Do**

For people who are used to watch *Reog* performance, it is easy to spot the difference between the genuine possession and the *made up* possession. According to the shaman, Mr. Sutrimo, the movement of the *Reog* performers in genuine possession begins with the process when the bodies of the performers are thrown off. When the rhythm of the music slows down, their movement also becomes slower. In this part, the performers are willing to hit their heads with roof tiles, eat glass, and do other dangerous things before the spirits leave the body. Before the spirits completely leave the body, there are many things

that they want to do such as shaking hands with the host or other requests to grant such as asking food from the seller.

In addition, in *made up* possession there will be a part when the *Reog* performers will give a code by pointing index finger to the musician to begin playing the music. When the flowers have been spread into the air, the performers will fall onto the ground pretending that they get possessed. There will be no special request to grant because the requests have been done before the performances. The performers do not have to do dangerous things because they only entertain the audiences with something hilarious. They are putting a funny make up, asking for food from the seller, dancing hilariously, and pretending to be a woman.

They usually avoid being treated like the performers that are possessed. Their purpose is to entertain the audiences, not to do a dangerous performance like when performers who are possessed. Because the pain that the performers will feel is real since they are fully conscious, that is why whenever they see the shaman holding the whip they will start to move to the corner and hide.



*Fig 12 : Two reog performers who do the made up possession teasing the reog performer that get possessed*



*Fig 13 : Two reog performers that do the made up possession with funny make up and eating food*



*Fig : 14 reog performers do the made up possession showing the standing hand pose*

In conclusion, genuine possession in *reog* performance is categorized as an exclusive condition as mentioned by Cohen (2008, p.3) since it is a kind of possession that deals with spirits and will take over the control of the host and replace the host's mind to change the behavior. On the other hand, the *made up* performance is not exclusive because everybody can be requested to do some *made ups* to entertain the audience.