

Wayang Sasak as a Media for Dakwah Case Study of Ki Dalang Buwana Sanggar H. Safwan, AR in Batu Rimpang Dusun Badrain Village Narmada District, West Lombok Regency



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ABSTRACT

Shadow puppets, a cultural gem of Indonesia, embody acting, sound, music, literature, sculpture, and symbolism. For the Sasak people, puppets hold deep significance as a medium of communication and entertainment, enabling the delivery of Islamic dakwah messages through their storylines. This study focuses on how puppeteer Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR, of Sanggar Buwana in Batu Rimpang, West Lombok, conveys dakwah messages during puppet performances. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected via observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings highlight the puppeteer's efforts to integrate dakwah messages, which resonate with audiences by incorporating philosophy and noble values. Puppet performances significantly influence fans, offering life lessons in engaging ways. However, challenges persist: limited publicity restricts audiences to local villagers, funding constraints prevent adding personnel to attract more viewers, and younger generations show declining interest in puppetry. Despite these obstacles, shadow puppetry remains a culturally valuable and impactful tool for communication and education within Sasak society, bridging tradition and Islamic values for the community's benefit. The art form continues to be a reflection of cultural heritage and moral guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

Wayang art is a religious ritual performance linked to the spiritual process called ruwatan. The ruwatan process is held to prevent disasters for the person being purified. During the Majapahit kingdom era, artistic performances, including wayang, were closely related to Hindu-Buddhist religious activities. The existence of wayang as a ritual performance that grew in society at that time attracted the attention of Wali Songo—the nine Islamic missionaries in Indonesia—to use it as a medium for spreading Islam. To align with Islamic teachings, Wali Songo made several deformative changes to the existing wayang performances in society. These changes included the form and stories to align with Islamic teachings (Apriaman, 2021).

Humans, as personal and social beings, have many goals and aspirations they wish to achieve, with each person having different needs. At the same time, as social beings, individuals cannot be separated from interactions with others and the dynamic life around them. In the process of civilization development, a nation has customs that differ from one another. These differences are crucial elements that provide characteristics and identity to the nation (Apriaman, 2021). History tells that Sunan Prapen used wayang to spread Islam on the island of Lombok. This wayang later became known as Wayang Sasak. Unlike Javanese Wayang or

Balinese Wayang that played stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata, Wayang Sasak takes the Serat Menak as its source of stories (Apriaman, 2021).

Initially, Sunan Prapen, the son of Sunan Giri, who spread Islam in Lombok, brought the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata. However, around the 17th century, since the Sasak community was already monotheistic, the stories were replaced with Serat Menak tales. The Serat Menak story revolves around the journey of a king known as Amirul Mukminin, Amir Hamzah, or Raja Jayengrana (Apriaman, 2021). To create balanced individuals, the role of a da'i or preacher is necessary so that individuals, families, and communities adopt Islam as a way of thinking and living, leading to a happy life in both this world and the hereafter. The wayang kulit performance is an effective medium for conveying religious messages. Wayang kulit is an ancient cultural art that has been preserved for centuries and remains prevalent in society. Since the arrival of Islam, Wali Songo used it as a medium for spreading Islamic teachings in the Sasak land.

Each wayang character symbolizes various traits found in human life. There are evil characters and good ones. Some symbolize honesty, justice, purity, and heroism, while others represent anger, greed, dishonesty, and more. Some character traits are worthy of imitation, while others should be avoided. These symbols can be beneficial for personal development, at least for self-reflection (Aron, 2021). Wayang stories depict situations and messages within the wayang kulit performances. These stories are not just art performances but also serve as a means to convey religious messages or teachings. The dalang character is not an all-capable interpreter but requires the ability to act as a cultural expert, teacher, critic, and speaker who can interpret content, thoughts, and feelings.

The preliminary study conducted by the researcher at Sanggar Buana Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR, in Batu Rimpang Hamlet, Badrain Village, Narmada Sub-district, found that this sanggar (studio) was initially formed because several cultural figures, such as the late Mik Mujitahid, stated that the potential to establish and preserve a culture, including wayang, was still very significant. This studio was named Amukti Baskara, which means activities closely related to the community, aimed at explaining or preserving culture. The studio was established around 1998 until 2010, and in 2010, after the members decided to form their own studios, Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR decided to change the name of the studio from Amukti Baskara to Sanggar Buwana. Through the renaming process, Ki Dalang was invited to receive training to become a studio teacher and dalang (puppeteer) in Jakarta in 2014. The establishment deed for Sanggar Buwana itself was issued in 2008.

Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR began puppeteering when he was in 3rd grade, engaging with the wayang in Badrain Village. Since the age of 9, Ki Dalang started receiving invitations for wayang performances. By 6th grade, Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR had already begun making wayang from cardboard. His dedication led him to perform in areas outside his village. Ki Dalang H. Safwan became the only puppeteer from Lombok directly appointed by PEPADI (Indonesian Puppeteers Association) to undergo training to earn the title of Ki Dalang. Besides providing performances, Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR also ensures that his messages do not alter the content or meaning, as his messages contain many religious aspects. According to Ki Dalang, the most crucial part of wayang dakwah (religious proselytizing through wayang) is identifying the audience and delivering the vision and mission effectively. The most prominent characters are Prabunursiwan with Patih Baktat or Patih Baktiar, who are the main subjects of dakwah. The research problem is limited to how the message (dakwah) is packaged in a wayang sasak performance by Sanggar Buwana Ki Dalang H. Safwan, AR, in Batu Rimpang Hamlet, Badrain Village, Narmada Sub-district, West Lombok Regency. The goal is to understand how a puppeteer packages the message (dakwah) in a wayang performance.

METHOD

In general, research methods are defined as scientific ways to obtain data with specific purposes and uses. There are four key terms to note: scientific methods, data, purpose, and specific uses. Scientific methods mean that research activities are based on scientific characteristics, namely rational, empirical, and systematic. Rational means that research activities are carried out in a reasonable way that can be comprehended by human reasoning, empirical means that the methods used can be observed by human senses, so others can

observe and understand the methods used. Systematic means that the process used in the research employs specific, logical steps (Sugiyono 2017:3, Suryadmaja et al., 2015). This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive means a problem formulation that guides the research to explore or capture the research situation comprehensively, broadly, and deeply. In qualitative research, data is obtained from various sources. Data collection techniques are also varied and continuously carried out until the data is valid. Here, the researcher acts as the main data collector. The instruments in this research are observation, interviews, and documentation.

In this qualitative research, the researcher will approach by visiting Sanggar Buwana twice a month and directly observing the training process of Sasak shadow puppetry as a medium of preaching. Afterwards, the researcher will conduct interviews with the puppeteer to strengthen data and information. The researcher uses this method because the researcher wants to describe the field conditions more specifically, transparently, and deeply. This research describes situations or events so that the collected data is descriptive to identify the application of the method in wayang kulit performances as a preaching medium at Sanggar Buwana. The process of data collection for research is carried out by observation, interviews, documentation, and literature study. The research to be conducted to answer the formulated questions will use a qualitative methodology. This type of research means a description or depiction of the object under study in writing and is expressed in detail, clearly, and as it is. Data analysis, according to Sugiyono (2018:482), is the process of systematically searching and organizing data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation by organizing the data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing, arranging it into patterns, selecting what is important and to be studied, and making conclusions so that it is easy to understand by oneself and others.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A dalang is the central figure in wayang performances. The dalang is both the director and the artist who performs the wayang. A dalang must memorize many wayang stories, understand the genealogy of the wayang characters, and know the philosophy contained in them. They must be able to narrate the stories orderly, coherently, fluently, and captivantly. A dalang must also skillfully perform and demonstrate the wayang characters they play, understanding each character's traits. A dalang is also required to master the accompanying gending songs and sing them, which is a primary requirement for a dalang. Additionally, they must skillfully modulate their voice so that the character's voice reflects the wayang character's personality. A good dalang should have charisma, enthusiasm, and the ability to control and influence the audience's emotions. Moreover, they must be physically fit because they are required to perform wayang all night long.

A dalang symbolizes logic, thought, intuition, imagination, emotion, and human desires that drive the body. The dalang holds a very crucial role in wayang performances. Becoming a dalang requires extensive skills. The skills a dalang must possess include: 1. The level of proficiency in the songs to be performed. In Wayang Sasak performances, the dalang must master the work "Serat Menak," the main material of Wayang Sasak. 2. The dalang must also have broad knowledge, both in religious and general knowledge. This wealth of knowledge is reflected in the dalang's performance. They must be fluent in Kawi (Old Javanese), Sasak, and Balinese languages. Using the Serat Menak script as the basis for Wayang Sasak and adapting it into the Wayang Sasak performance form requires a dalang fluent in all three languages. Kawi is used by the main characters in Wayang Sasak, Balinese is used by the character Umar Madi to build rapport with the Balinese audience, and Sasak is widely spoken in Lombok as a cultural dialect.

The role of a Wayang Sasak dalang requires a thorough understanding of the story's core. This is necessary so the dalang can freely choose the storyline to be performed. Mastery of story structure is also essential in the learning process. Understanding the text enhances the dalang's ability to improvise if unexpected situations arise. Among all Sasak dalangs in Lombok, most understand the text or story structure by appreciating every performance. Wayang performances encompass other art elements, including gending (songs). Therefore, the dalang's musicality significantly supports the performance quality. Additionally, all-night

wayang performances require the vocal stamina of the dalang. In Wayang Sasak, the connection between flute players is very close. The sound of the flute always signals a change in the scene. Moreover, a dalang must have extensive knowledge of supporting areas such as religion, politics, health, culture, philosophy, and more. A person with broad insight can voice the issues around them. The rerencekan characters always play side scenes in wayang performances. As previously explained, the rerencekan characters represent the marginalized society in Lombok, and these scenes can serve as a discussion of the previous scene, providing the audience with a better understanding of the Old Javanese language. These characters come from various tribes and customs. Mastery of language and dialect brings more life to the characters played.

A dalang must have skills in manipulating wayang puppets, including knowing various ways to operate the puppets and differentiating the voices of characters. A dalang must master three types of voices. These three voices correspond to the puppet characters. They are three types of voices: dalem voice (a deep voice typically used by giants), middle voice (a rounded voice typically used by wise characters like a patih, such as Wong Agung Menak Jayengrane), and high-pitched voice (a head voice, often used for female characters). To become a Wayang Sasak Islamic dalang, you must also delve into the knowledge of tauhid. Syariat, tarikat, hakikat, and ma'rifat are the four levels that must be studied. There will be a well-established vertical relationship between humans and humans if the horizontal relationship (relationship between humans and God) is well-established too, and vice versa.

A dalang is more than just a puppeteer; they are a solo actor presenting a complex performance that integrates various art elements. The role of a dalang goes far beyond the physical manipulation of the puppets behind the screen. In this context, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR is a solo actor performing multiple roles in one performance. In wayang performances, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR plays various characters and roles, from the main characters to supporting roles. When Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR acts as a solo actor, they must also be capable of being a narrator. This means that Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR must be able to change voice intonation, facial expressions (implied in the puppets' movements), and speaking styles to differentiate each character.

When the dalang acts as an actor, they express themselves through the characters they play. They pour their emotions, thoughts, and views into the performance. The dalang must also be able to create interactions with the audience through dialogue, facial expressions, and wayang movements. A dalang must be able to make the audience laugh, cry, and be stunned. Therefore, the dalang needs the ability to improvise to adapt the performance to the situation and the audience's responses. In playing the role of an actor, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR is influenced by his daily life and environment. This is evident in how Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR acts during wayang performances. When performing the right and left wayang characters using the Kawi language with various characters, it is influenced by Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR's daily life as a singer, lontar script reader, and pembayun. Similarly, when Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR plays the Punakawan (Rerencek) characters, it is influenced by his social interactions and daily life in his environment. These conditions influence Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR's puppeteering style, using language easily understood by the general public while maintaining the classical performance's character, local wisdom, and humor.

In a wayang performance, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR is not merely a puppeteer. Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR acts as a director in every performance, coordinating all elements to create a complete and engaging show. In this role, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR designs the concept of the performance, from selecting the story to be staged, considering the theme's relevance and social conditions, to conveying moral and religious messages. Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR also interprets the story to differentiate it and determine the main theme to be conveyed through the wayang performance. As a director in a wayang performance, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR also controls the tempo and atmosphere of the show, from slow, emphasized parts to fast and tense segments, ensuring that the intended message, especially the religious message, is effectively communicated. Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR also precisely manages the story's climax to ensure the audience experiences the peak emotions of the performance. Additionally, the dalang is responsible for sound and music arrangements. To handle sound and music, the dalang collaborates with the Pengrawit (musicians) to select Gending that match the mood

and scenes and arrange dialogues and Tembang to suit the situation and character of the wayang. The dalang and Pengrawit interact to set the tempo and atmosphere.

If analogized, the dalang is a director, scriptwriter, and main character. The wayang are the supporting actors and props. The Gamelan is the accompanying music, and the screen in a wayang performance serves as a cinema screen. In this context, Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR is a creative director capable of controlling all aspects of the wayang performance. Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR can also bring classical stories to life and convey profound religious messages to the audience through the skillful portrayal of the punakawan (Rerencek) characters, as detailed in the fifth sub-chapter in the Rerencek section.

Wayang as a medium of preaching

The source of stories used in Wayang Sasak performances is the Serat Menak, which tells the journey of Amir Hamzah, the son of the uncle of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Serat Menak does not merely narrate the values and norms of Islam. However, the themes brought in every wayang performance in Lombok are always related to Islamic teachings and are dominated by the tales of Amir Hamzah as the main story in Wayang Sasak performances. Within wayang Sasak, Serat Menak is commonly known as Bel (babon carita) and is a major source, proving Wayang Sasak as a medium for preaching, mostly derived from the tales of Amir Hamzah, containing many values of heroism, leadership, and sacrifice for religion. It is expected to inspire and guide the Sasak community's life. One such story from Bel or Serat Menak is the story of Menak Sidang-Dayang. Through the story of Sidang-Dayang, we can see the preaching messages contained within it, such as moral messages, noble character, and Islamic teachings. Almost all stories in Serat Menak Hikayat Amir Hamzah always contain a propagation to embrace the sacred religion and follow the sharia of Prophet Ibrahim. Over time, these messages are delivered by the dalang following the needs of preaching adjusted to the social conditions of their time. Thus, in Wayang Sasak performances, the dalang needs the ability to convey messages of religious preaching.

From these stories, the dalang of Wayang Sasak in the past formed the patterns and presentation structures in performances, especially in the development period, to insert preaching messages. The main story or Serat Menak itself contains many preaching messages because the script is based on the Hikayat Amir Hamzah, dominated by the tales of the Prophet's uncle. Wayang kulit as traditional art is the most familiar entertainment for its audience. This is because Wayang Sasak is an affordable show, and its stories are deeply integrated with the community. In Wayang Sasak performances, the dalang play a very important role for the community, functioning as "enlighteners," which in Arabic is called "dallah." In the past, the dalang also acted as Islamic preachers, although wayang was originally a Hindu heritage. The Islamic missionaries strived to approach the community, transforming the wayang influenced by Hinduism into a new form imbued with Islamic values. They sometimes inserted Islamic teachings into the performances.

Sunan Kalijaga was the most prominent figure in preaching through wayang. In Lombok, wayang is undoubtedly a primary tool for preaching due to its story content and philosophical values rooted in Islam. In a wayang performance, the first thing we see is a blank white screen surrounded by black, indicating that the universe was initially created by God in a void state without inhabitants. The wayang lamp (belencong) is lit, symbolizing that the universe and life within it exist solely because of His Light. Then the Gunungan Wayang is first lowered by the dalang, symbolizing that life was created on Earth as a source of sustenance for humans, followed by the descent of Adam and Eve. Thus, the dalang also lowers two wayang puppets, Jayengrana and Dewi Munigarim. These examples highlight the significant role of wayang in nurturing Islamic preaching.

According to Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR, Wayang Kulit Sasak remains an efficient medium for embedding preaching messages today, as the Sasak community is still very enthusiastic about preserving Wayang Kulit Sasak. In the world of wayang, a dalang is defined as someone with special skills in manipulating wayang puppets (ndalang). In wayang performances, the dalang plays a very central role. For example, from a language perspective, performing wayang requires mastering various levels of speech appropriate to each character's status. Without mastering this aspect, the wayang performance would appear poor and fail to captivate the

audience. Therefore, a *dalang* is someone who can depict every beauty created with heartfelt words, capable of captivating the audience, and rich with moral messages.

In *wayang* stories, just like in everyday human life, there are two aspects: good and bad. Similarly, in *wayang* stories, messages are conveyed. The messages delivered by the *dalang* are crucial, especially in terms of religious preaching. When performing, Ki H. Safwan AR inserts preaching messages to be conveyed through *Wayang Kulit*. According to Ki H. Safwan AR, in everyday life, we must realize that we are perfect beings, made perfect by the power of Allah SWT. By purifying ourselves and drawing closer to Allah, we must be grateful for all the blessings He has bestowed upon us.

As far as the meaning contained in *wayang*, in terms of its Islamic essence, the *wayang* we see now are the creations of the *wali* (Islamic saints). We also find other Islamic philosophies in the *Gunungan*. The *Gunungan* was created during the Demak kingdom era by Raden Patah around 1443. Before the performance begins, the *Gunungan* is placed in the center of the *kelir* (screen), which is the focal point for the audience. This *Gunungan* symbolizes the "Mustika Mosque." If the *Gunungan* is turned, it resembles the human heart, consisting of the right chamber, left chamber, right atrium, and left atrium. This symbolism carries an Islamic philosophy that means a person's heart should always be in the mosque. If a person has no intention of going to the mosque, their faith is not yet perfect. The *dalang* inserts the *Gunungan* in the center of the *kelir*, signifying that the first thing to be prioritized in life is the mosque or the importance of worshipping Allah SWT.

In *wayang kulit* performances, there are many moral messages, *Aqidah* values, *Akhlaq* (ethics), and *Sharia* conveyed by the *dalang*. These messages form the core intent or purpose to be communicated to the general public through *wayang kulit* performances. In *wayang kulit* performances, there are also messages of *Aqidah*, *Akhlaq*, and *Sharia*, which are fundamental noble values that every Muslim must possess. In the field of *Aqidah*, the discussion is not only directed at issues that must be believed but also covers prohibited matters, such as *Shirk* (associating partners with Allah), *Mushrik*, and others. In practice, the *dalang* encourages Muslims, particularly the *wayang kulit* audience, to believe in prayer and spirituality, which are obligatory for Muslims. Prayer is an expression of faith in Allah, the One and Only God. The assumption of God's existence as *Rabb* or the regulator of human affairs implies that everyone must worship. Before starting the *wayang kulit* performance, Ki H. Safwan AR performs a ritual prayer to Allah to ensure the smooth running of the *wayang kulit* performance.

Sanggar Buwana led by Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR has performed more than 20 times on regional and national stages, with four performances each year. In every *Wayang Kulit Sasak* performance, preaching messages are always embedded. The preaching messages in this context refer to the moral and character portrayals of each protagonist played by the *dalang*, such as characters who are patient, faithful to Allah SWT, diligent in worship, persistent in achieving goals, gentle, loving, and so on. All these portrayals are part of preaching through *Wayang Kulit* performances. Every time he performs, the *dalang* interacts with the audience to keep them focused on enjoying and understanding the performance. Usually, Ki H. Safwan AR inserts the preaching messages at the end of the performance.

Based on the main script of *Wayang Sasak*, most stories are sourced from *Serat Menak*, specifically the tales of Amir Hamzah, the uncle of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Through these stories, the audience is invited to emulate the heroism, bravery, and faith of Amir Hamzah in defending the religion. Besides tales of heroism, *Wayang Sasak* is also rich in moral messages such as honesty, patience, justice, and the importance of maintaining social harmony and religious tolerance. *Wayang Sasak* also uses the concepts of *tauhid* and *aqidah* as central themes, focusing on the oneness of God. This means that the audience is invited to remember and worship Allah SWT.

Wayang Sasak performances also encourage the audience to do good deeds, avoid bad actions, and help others. The *dalang* emphasizes the importance of seeking knowledge and education by featuring wise characters who provide advice on the significance of knowledge in daily life. Generally, *Wayang Sasak* performances have four main sections that contain preaching messages:

a) Pengaksame Section

Pengaksame is the prologue of a Wayang Sasak performance. The prologue starts with the dalang's voice before the appearance of the Gunungan and the characters Jayang Rana and Muni Garim. Pengaksame comprises opening statements containing apologies and invitations with preaching messages.

b) Penangkilan Section

Penangkilan is the process or act of moving something from one place to another. This term can be used in various contexts depending on the object being moved. In the Wayang Sasak process, Penangkilan can be interpreted as the transition from the pengaksame scene to the introduction of characters in Wayang Sasak, conducted by the dalang during the performance. Penangkilan is divided into two parts:

1. Penangkilan Wayang Kanan (Right Side Wayang Penangkilan), which includes a series of well-behaved characters such as Jayangrana, Umar Maya, Maktal, Darundia, Tanus, Tamtanus, Selandir, Umar Madi, and Kusnendar.
2. Penangkilan Wayang Kiri (Left Side Wayang Penangkilan), which consists of characters with negative or less desirable behaviors such as Prabu Nursiwan, Lurah, and Kembung. The names of the left-side characters in Penangkilan are adjusted according to the play to be performed. The message contained in Penangkilan is the wise and prudent behavior of the right-side characters, especially the character Jayang Rana.

c) Lakon Section

Lakon comes from the word laku, which means something that is ongoing or an event, or a depiction of human nature in daily life. Lakon represents human traits and characters in the world. It can also be defined as an event or story that is re-enacted with behaviors through living intermediaries (humans) or something (wayang) as players. In the context of performing arts or wayang, lakon refers to the storyline or script that forms the basis of the performance. Lakon includes a series of events, dialogues, and interrelated characters that shape a complete story. In Wayang Sasak, lakon is the content of the Menak script containing preaching messages, usually conveyed with an invitation to embrace the holy religion and follow the sharia of Prophet Ibrahim in the dialogue between left-side and right-side wayang before the battle begins.

d) Rerencek Section

In Wayang Sasak performances, Rerencek are commoner characters with clownish or comedic traits, functioning to convey messages based on the local community's condition and language where the performance is held. The Rerencek characters also provide entertainment and humor to the audience. They often have distinctive appearances, humorous traits, and funny dialogues. These Rerencek characters often bring a cheerful atmosphere in the midst of a serious storyline and convey social, political, cultural, and religious messages in a light and easily understood manner. The dalang often inserts preaching messages through the Rerencek characters, such as Amaq Keseq, Amaq Ocong, Amaq Baok, Inaq Itet, and Inaq Ajep.

In delivering preaching messages, the dalang usually introduces symbols in the Wayang Sasak performance. Moreover, Wayang Sasak is believed to be not just an entertainment but also a guide in life. The dalang often discusses values and behaviors in life related to divinity. As observed by researchers during the Wayang Sasak performance by Ki Dalang H. Safwan AR, the dalang explains that wayang itself represents the human life that coexists and pairs, for example, with good and evil characters. The dalang also reminds the audience about the creation process of humans symbolized through the characters.

Supporting and inhibiting factors

The supporting factors for wayang kulit performances as a medium of preaching include local community participation in helping to implement the sedekah bumi program and community participation with voluntary contributions. The elements of the performance,

including the dalang, pengrawit (musicians), sinden (singers), comedians, and the dalang's assistants, all appear cohesive and complement each other when performing throughout the night. The facilities and infrastructure include a set of sound systems, gamelan, and a strategic venue, along with loyal spectators who watch until the end.

The inhibiting factors include limited publicity outside the village, resulting in fewer spectators from outside the village; limited funding from the committee, preventing the dalang from adding more personnel, which is an attraction to keep the audience engaged until the end; and a declining interest in wayang kulit, especially among the younger generation. If this issue is not promptly addressed by the relevant authorities, wayang kulit will become increasingly extinct. This presents a significant challenge for the dalang to find ways for the younger generation to participate in preserving this Sasak culture, namely wayang kulit.

CONCLUSION

Based on what has been mentioned above, the following conclusions can be drawn: a wayang performance must use a language that the community can understand. Therefore, the dalang must master what he needs to know, namely the language and the traditions. In wayang kulit performances, dalang Ki H. Safwan AR always strives to package preaching messages that the local community can easily digest. During the performance, Ki H. Safwan AR inserts messages about Islam, conveyed through the wayang characters' traits. He also delivers messages of Akhlaq, Aqidah, and Sharia. In wayang kulit performances, Ki H. Safwan AR focuses more on the final hours to deliver preaching messages, with more Islamic messages conveyed due to the audience's endurance to fight drowsiness. In life, everything has supporting and inhibiting factors, as does the wayang kulit performance of Ki H. Safwan AR.

As a suggestion in this research, dalang Ki H. Safwan AR should firmly uphold the significant responsibility for the work's outcome and the messages conveyed during the performance. The wayang kulit performances have a significant influence on wayang kulit enthusiasts and the community watching the performances. The art of wayang kulit should not fade from the culture that has existed for thousands of years, so that our descendants can experience the cultural heritage from their birthplace and ancestors. Not to forget, in wayang kulit performances, these art stories can educate and bring more goodness to the enthusiasts and community, just as packaging preaching messages can be integrated with stories according to current developments.

For the community, there is an obligation to teach what has been learned from any lesson, such as after watching a wayang kulit performance. Everyone should continue to preach according to their respective fields and abilities because Islamic preaching is not focused on just one field, but on all fields and abilities that can carry out the preaching. For the Indonesian community, preserve your own culture. More moral, Akhlaq, Aqidah, and Sharia messages are embedded in every culture in this country. Make our culture known worldwide so we can be proud to be Indonesians. Do not only imitate the West to make this generation famous; make this country famous with the culture inherited from our ancestors.

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