

## Analysis Of Cultural Acculturation of Suran Wayang Kulit Among The Samin Community in Blora Regency

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### Abstract

This study demonstrates how the *Suran* Shadow Puppet performance serves as a vital instrument for cultural integration within the Samin community in Blora. The performance bridges local wisdom and Samin philosophy with modernization, illustrating how traditional art functions as a mediator of social change while simultaneously preserving cultural identity. By analyzing the role of the *Suran* Shadow Puppet show, this research broadens academic understanding, provides theoretical insights, and supports cultural preservation in line with the principles of Sustainable Development. The study employs qualitative methods, including literature review, in-depth interviews, and participatory observation of *Suran* Shadow Puppet performances. The findings reveal that acculturation is manifested through religious, socio-cultural, and communicative dimensions, positioning the *Suran* Shadow Puppet show not only as entertainment but also as a medium for transmitting the core values of the Samin community. These values emphasize honesty, simplicity, commitment, and solidarity. The study affirms that such performances facilitate adaptation to change without compromising cultural identity, while functioning as an effective means of cultural preservation in the digital era.

**Keyword:** suran wayang kulit; samin; acculturation; local culture

### Abstrak

Studi ini menunjukkan bagaimana pertunjukan Wayang Kulit Suran berperan sebagai instrumen penting bagi integrasi budaya dalam komunitas Samin di Blora. Pertunjukan ini menjembatani kearifan lokal dan filosofi Samin dengan modernisasi serta menggambarkan bagaimana seni tradisional menjadi mediator perubahan sosial sekaligus menjaga identitas budaya. Dengan menganalisis peran pertunjukan Wayang Kulit Suran, penelitian ini memperluas pemahaman akademis, memberikan wawasan teoretis, serta mendukung pelestarian budaya yang selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip Pembangunan Berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif melalui studi pustaka, wawancara mendalam, dan observasi partisipatif pada pertunjukan Wayang Kulit Suran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa akulturasi terwujud melalui dimensi religius, sosial-budaya, dan komunikasi, sehingga menjadikan Wayang Kulit Suran tidak hanya menjadi hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai media untuk menyampaikan nilai-nilai inti komunitas Samin. Nilai-nilai tersebut menekankan pada nilai-nilai inti komunitas Samin, yaitu kejujuran, kesederhanaan, komitmen, dan solidaritas. Studi ini membuktikan bahwa pertunjukan tersebut mendukung adaptasi terhadap perubahan namun tetap menjaga identitas budaya, serta menjadi sarana efektif untuk pelestarian budaya di era digital.

**Kata Kunci:** wayang kulit suran; samin; akulturasi; budaya lokal

## Introduction

Cultural acculturation is a dynamic phenomenon (Mustafa et al. 2025) that plays an important role in the formation of collective identity in a society, especially in the midst of globalization and the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which is currently growing rapidly (Kunsy, Lefringhausen, and Zagefka 2024) (Jia and Krettenauer 2022). The influence of globalization can erode local culture (Yuliani, Yanti KL, and Yuningsih 2019). The role of the community is crucial in filtering incoming influences so that they do not undermine the existing local wisdom (Muamara and Ajmain 2020).

*Wayang Kulit Suran* (Suran Shadow Puppet) is a traditional art performance held in the month of *Sura* (*Muharram*), with *wayang kulit* staged in *Suran* with *gagrak Ngayogyakarta*. Apart from being entertainment, it is also imbued with symbolism and local wisdom values that foster cultural harmony. On the other hand, the Samin people in Blora Regency are known for their egalitarian philosophy and rooted local values (Safitri and Hasanudin 2022).

Research on cultural acculturation between the Wayang Kulit Suran tradition and the Samin community remains scarce, presenting a significant challenge for scholars. The urgency of such studies becomes even more pronounced when linked to contemporary global issues. For instance, the preservation of local culture aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly target 11.4, which emphasizes the protection and

safeguarding of the world's cultural heritage. Furthermore, within the context of ongoing social transformations and rapid advancements in the digital era, examining cultural acculturation is crucial for sustaining the collective identity of communities (Yudhanto 2024).

Acculturation is a social process that takes place when a cultural group engages in sustained interaction with external cultural elements (Haramain 2017). The two-dimensional acculturation model outlines that individuals undergoing this process encounter two primary orientations: first, the extent to which they maintain their identity and involvement with their culture of origin, and second, the extent to which they adopt and participate in the dominant culture (Jannah 2023). From the combination of these orientations, four acculturation strategies emerge: (1) assimilation, in which individuals engage exclusively with the dominant culture; (2) integration, involving active participation in both cultures; (3) separation, characterized by the preservation of only the original culture; and (4) marginalization, where individuals are disengaged from both cultural contexts (Retnoati 2021).

The definition of acculturation is a refinement into the process of approaching one social group to another in the field of culture or art through contact, as well as the transfer of cultural elements from one social group to another (Roszi and Mutia 2018). Acculturation is a concept that specifically (Gordon 1964).

Redfield identifies three key factors that influence cultural acculturation. First, direct contact between two cultural groups or individuals serves as a fundamental prerequisite for the acculturation process. Such interaction occurs continuously within the same spatial and temporal context, thereby enabling tangible cultural change. Second, mutual influence emerges, wherein both cultures undergo transformations as a result of sustained interaction. Third, change itself becomes an inherent component of the acculturation process, reflecting ongoing socio-cultural dynamics that may lead to the formation of new and more stable cultural patterns (Suriani 2021); (Suriani 2021) (Isdiyanti 2019).

The Samin community, often referred to as adherents of Saminism or *Sedulur Sikep*, represents one of the cultural groups in Indonesia, particularly concentrated in Karangpace Hamlet, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency, Central Java Province. These communities are descendants and followers of important figures in the Samin movement, namely: First, Suro Samin (Eyang Engkrek), who was born in Klopoduwur in 1845 and died in Klopoduwur in 1947. Second, Suro Sentiko was born in Ploso Kediren in 1859, then died in Sawahlunto, West Sumatra, in 1914. Third, Suro Sumanto was born unknown, then died in Tapak Siring, Gianyar regency, Bali. These three figures played pivotal roles in inspiring resistance against Dutch colonial rule, not through physical confrontation, but

rather by refusing to pay taxes and opposing the policies and regulations imposed by the colonial administration.

The teachings of *Sedulur Sikep* continue to be practiced by subsequent generations and followers who have spread across various regions, including Grobongan, Kudus, Pati, Rembang, Semarang, Tuban, and even areas beyond Java. The central doctrine of *Sedulur Sikep* in Klopoduwur emphasizes the principle of universal brotherhood, whereby everything that exists on Earth is regarded as kin. This worldview underscores their belief in the interconnectedness of all beings. The community's philosophy is further articulated through the *Panca Visi* (Five Principles), which serve as a moral framework: (1) brotherhood (*seduluran*); (2) love of peace and tolerance, expressed as the rejection of hostility; (3) an outlook that transcends conventional notions of justice and injustice; (4) refraining from slandering or wronging others (*ojo ngenah liyan*); and (5) remembrance of the Almighty as a guiding spiritual principle. These values remain a cornerstone of the community's way of life. (Interview with Lasiyo, *Pendopo Sedulur Sikep Samin* Karangpace, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency, Central Java, July 21, 2025).

In accordance with Samin cultural traditions, the community holds an annual *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance in the form of *Ruwat Agung*, staged every Tuesday *Kliwon* night in the month of Sura. This ritual is accompanied by the practice of

*melekan*, a form of spiritual discipline (*tirakat*). To contextualize the present study, it is important to position it within existing scholarly work by outlining a research roadmap. Four relevant prior studies are considered here. First, the study by (Hazim, J.D, and Ibrahim 2023) emphasizes the preservation of local wisdom within the daily lives of the Samin community in Bojonegoro. However, it does not examine in depth the dynamics of interaction and cultural adaptation with external influences, thereby leaving space for a more specific and innovative perspective.

Second, unlike the study conducted by (Nurcahyawati, Syahid, and Anugrahputri 2022), which primarily focused on the preservation and staging of cultural performances—specifically the *Ngarak Barong* art tradition in Kampung Legok, Bekasi—this research explores more profoundly how the traditional culture of *wayang kulit* interacts with local cultural values to foster both harmony and cultural innovation.

Third, the study by (Damsuki 2021) primarily examines the institution of marriage within the Samin community, without addressing artistic media or broader cultural symbols. In contrast, the present research emphasizes the Wayang Kulit Suran performance as a cultural element that functions not merely as entertainment but also as a significant medium for understanding the acculturation process between local traditions and modern influences.

Fourth, the study by (Sadiran and Rifa'i 2023) concentrates primarily on parenting practices and the resilience of the Samin community in facing modernization. By contrast, the present research adopts a different perspective by examining cultural acculturation as a dynamic phenomenon, bringing together the *Wayang Kulit Suran* tradition as a form of traditional art and the Samin community as an indigenous group deeply rooted in local values.

While existing studies have advanced the preservation of local culture and understanding of Samin community life, little research has explored how the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance serves as a medium for cultural acculturation between local values and external influences. No comprehensive work has yet examined the interaction of traditional art and indigenous philosophy within broader social and technological transformations. This gap is critical amidst the need to safeguard cultural identity in an era of modernization and digitalization. Thus, positioning the *Wayang Kulit Suran* as both a cultural symbol and an instrument of acculturation is highly relevant, as it bridges tradition and innovation while supporting cultural preservation in line with Sustainable Development Goal 11.4.

This study aims to: (1) examine the process of cultural acculturation between the Wayang Kulit Suran tradition and the Samin community in Blora Regency; (2) explore the communicative, social, and cultural

dimensions of this process; (3) assess the role of the Wayang Kulit Suran in fostering harmony and cultural innovation while preserving Samin identity; and (4) analyze its contribution to local cultural preservation within the context of global challenges, including the SDGs and the digital era.

## Research Methods

This study begins at Technology Readiness Level (TRL) 1, which focuses on gathering fundamental knowledge and conducting preliminary analyses of the interaction between *Wayang Kulit Suran* traditions and the Samin community. The ultimate objective is to advance to TRL 2, signifying the development of an initial theoretical framework and scholarly contribution to the field of cultural communication. The transition from TRL 1 to TRL 2 is pursued through empirical data collection, validation of findings, and in-depth analysis. This process is expected to establish a new conceptual foundation for understanding cultural acculturation in the modern era. To achieve this, the research is structured into four stages, designed with a generic framework adapted to the specific context of the study, as follows: This study employs four methodological stages. First, a literature review and historical analysis are conducted to establish a conceptual foundation on *Wayang Kulit Suran*, Samin philosophy, and cultural acculturation theory (Sugiono 2008). Second, empirical data are collected through in-depth interviews

with puppeteers, Samin traditional leaders, and local academics (Sugiono 2008), as well as participatory observation of *Suran* performances and daily community life (Adhandayani 2020); (Manan 2021). Third, qualitative data are analyzed using an ethnographic approach (Moleong 2020) and validated through triangulation of interviews, observations, and literature (Ardiansyah and Jailani 2023), (Rahardjo and Mudjia. 2019). Finally, early theoretical development produces a conceptual model of cultural acculturation between *Wayang Kulit Suran* and the Samin community, validated through triangulation, peer review, and focus group discussions with local cultural practitioners (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2019), (Creswell and Creswell 2017), (Ahyar et al. 2020).

## Results and Discussion

Drawing on the aforementioned theoretical framework, field observations and interviews revealed four key elements. First, the process of cultural acculturation between the *Wayang Kulit Suran* tradition and the Samin community in Blora Regency. Second, the emergence of communicative, religious, social, and cultural dimensions within this acculturation process. Third, the role of the Wayang Kulit Suran as a medium for fostering harmony and cultural innovation while preserving the original identity of the Samin community. Fourth, the contribution of cultural acculturation to the preservation of local culture in the face of global challenges,

including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and social transformation in the digital era. As for the explanation, it is as follows:

### **Cultural Acculturation in Wayang Kulit Suran Performances As a Communication Medium For Saminism Teachings**

Based on field observations, the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance in the Samin community begins with a *bancaan* procession held after the evening (*Isha*) prayer. This ritual expresses gratitude to God Almighty and serves as a medium to strengthen social solidarity, attended by both community members and invited guests. Following this, the core ceremonial sequence commences, including the singing of the Indonesian national anthem, speeches by community representatives and local officials, and the symbolic handover of the puppet figure Raden Werkudara, the central character in the *Bima Suci* play. The performance is preceded by a *tirakat* closing prayer and the chanting of *salawat Yaa Allah Biha*, marking the transition from spiritual devotion to a cultural performance of entertainment value.

The choice of Raden Werkudara is highly symbolic. As advised by Lasiyo, the puppeteer was expected to portray Werkudara with traits reflecting the Samin philosophy—honesty, loyalty, and steadfastness on the right path. This character embodies the moral and spiritual struggles of the Samin community in Blora. Opening the

performance with a religious chant signifies the integration of tradition with religious values. The customary greeting ‘*Seger Waras*’ accompanied by a handshake, further conveys prayers and hopes for collective well-being during this annual ritual.

During the *Limbukan* session, *sinden* performed both traditional and children’s songs, including *Sinom*, *Gondoboyo*, *Srampat Kijing Tilting*, *Caping Gunung*, *Dadak Merak*, *Gajah-Gajah* and *Bintang Kecil*. These songs function not only as entertainment but also as vehicles of moral teaching (*pitutur luhur*), such as warnings against greed or hypocrisy. The participation of *sinden* from various regions and the involvement of audiences across generations highlight the inclusive and intergenerational nature of the performance, where music and dance foster collective joy.

As the main communicator, the puppeteer (*dalang*) plays a strategic role in conveying messages of morality, spirituality and social critique. Ki Sujarto, S.Pd, employed *nyondro/panyandra*—a traditional style combining parable and humor (Kurwidaria 2015)—to integrate social commentary on contemporary issues such as corruption and youth behavior. This underscores the function of the *Wayang Kulit Suran* as a cultural communication medium capable of delivering contextual moral and social messages.

Overall, the annual *Suran* performance of the Samin community demonstrates cultural acculturation that

blends religious rituals, respect for tradition, entertainment, and social critique within a single cultural form. From the perspective of communication studies, the *Wayang Kulit Suran* tradition is not merely entertainment or ritual but an effective means of transmitting the ethical and moral values of Saminism to broader audiences. The selection of *Bima Suci* is deeply symbolic: Bima embodies the Samin values of *bener, jujur lan ora srakah* (truthfulness, honesty and rejection of greed). Through mastery of *sulukan*, *sabetan*, and character dialogue, Ki Sujarto transforms the performance into a philosophical medium of cultural communication that affirms the identity and local wisdom of the Samin people.

In the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance, the history and teachings of Saminism are conveyed in Javanese *ngoko*, particularly during the *Limbukan* sessions. Distinctive Samin parables and rhetorical dialogues embed values such as honesty, simplicity, and resistance to greed, serving as subtle critiques of contemporary social issues. This communicative process unfolds in a sacred atmosphere, encouraging audiences to reflect on the meaning of a modest and truthful life as resistance to materialism.

Viewed through the lens of cultural acculturation, the performance illustrates adaptation without eroding identity. By integrating broader Javanese cultural elements while preserving the essence of Saminism, the Samin community

employs *wayang kulit* as a dialogical medium of cultural communication. In doing so, the *Wayang Kulit Suran* tradition not only operates as ritual entertainment but also functions as cultural resistance and a means of transmitting local wisdom across generations, thereby reaffirming the collective identity of the Samin people amid rapid social change.

### Dimensions of Communication, Religion, Social, and Cultural That Arise in the Process of Acculturation

The staging of *Wayang Kulit Suran* within the Samin community of Blora Regency reflects a process of cultural acculturation that can be analyzed through communication, social, and cultural dimensions. **First, the communication dimension.** Social interactions within the Samin community generally occur harmoniously without significant barriers.

The tradition of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) remains strongly upheld, as evidenced by the community's collective participation in events such as weddings, circumcision ceremonies, and the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance itself. Social activities are carried out in accordance with local customs, reflecting strong values of solidarity and togetherness. Communication within the community is conducted in *Ngoko* Javanese, often accompanied by parables as a medium for conveying meaning.

The Samin people consistently uphold honesty as a core principle and practice moral values that prohibit lying, stealing, and adultery. These values serve as ethical guidelines that continue to be preserved in daily community life (Octaviani 2016).

The *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance in the *Ruwat Agung* event, organized by the Samin community, represents a cultural tradition imbued with deep spiritual and philosophical significance. It serves as an effort to preserve the cultural identity of the *Sedulur Sikep* who reside in Karangpace Hamlet, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency. This tradition is held annually during the month of Sura in the Javanese calendar as a ritual of self-purification (*ruwatan*), practiced not only on an individual level but also collectively as an Indigenous community. The staging of *Wayang Kulit Suran* at the *Pendapa Kampung Samin* constitutes a vital cultural moment for the Samin people, reaffirming ancestral values and teachings while simultaneously serving as a form of cultural resilience amid the pressures of modernization.

The limitation of this study lies in its focus solely on the staging of *Wayang Kulit Suran* in 2025, specifically on Monday Wage–Tuesday Kliwon, July 21–22, 2025. According to the Javanese calendar, this date corresponds to 25–26 Suro 1959. The performance was routinely conducted by puppeteer Ki Sujarto, S.Pd., who presented the play *Bima Suci*. The selection of this play was

determined by Lasiyo, a fourth-generation descendant of the Samin community.

The choice of *Bima Suci*, featuring Raden Werkudara (also known as Bima) as the central figure, is regarded as particularly relevant to the character of the Samin people, who highly value honesty, simplicity, and steadfastness in upholding their life principles. The *Wayang Kulit Suran* all-night performance began with a symbolic handover of the main character by Lasiyo to the puppeteer. In this procession, Lasiyo emphasized that the character of Bima embodies the values of the Samin community, who consistently strive to follow the righteous path (*bener*) and uphold principles that avoid causing harm to others.

*Wayang Kulit Suran* is a symbol of cultural resistance to moral degradation presented by outside cultural influences (Interview with Lasiyo at Pendopo Sedulur Sikep Samin Karangpace Hamlet, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora regency, Central Java on Monday, July 21, 2025). The routine event every year is able to get wide attention from various parties, such as local officials and community leaders, by providing tangible support for *Wayang Kulit Suran*.

The presence of the Regent of Blora, Camat Banjarejo, Dandim 0721 Blora, and Kapolres Blora is proof of the support and synergy between the Samin tribal community and the local government in maintaining the sustainability of the hereditary tradition.

In addition, the presence of invited guests from outside the region shows that the traditions of the Samin people have a cross-community appeal that inspires cultural appreciation at a wider level (Tulas'un 2025). This is evidence that the *Wayang Kulit Suran* event can be used as a medium to convey communication messages from the government to residents, especially the *Wayang Kulit Suran* audience. In addition, the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance took place all night and was attended by people from various backgrounds, ranging from local residents, cultural figures to academics.

The arrangement of space in Pendapa Kampung Samin adapted to sacred nuances can add to the Solemnity of the ruwatan procession, so as to create an aesthetic atmosphere and full of spiritual values. The puppeteer's character when playing the play 'Bima Suci' was used as a media to review the values of the Samin Tribe, such as honesty, simplicity, and rejection of greed, was reaffirmed in front of the wider community. In addition to being a cultural preservation media, *Wayang Kulit Suran* staging serve as a means of education for the younger generation in order to understand and appreciate the wayang kulit as an ancestral cultural heritage.

Furthermore, values such as '*bener, jujur lan ora maruk*' continuously echoed through the open stage can make the tradition a medium to transfer values that are relevant to the challenges of the digital era. The consistency of the Samin people in caring for the *Wayang Kulit*

*Suran* tradition is a reflection of their steadfastness in maintaining their cultural identity in the midst of significant social changes.

Second, the religious dimension in *Wayang Kulit Suran* performances in Samin tribal communities in Blora Regency. The religious principle of the Samin people in Blora Regency is 'Wonge Adam, lakune Adam, munine Adam lan agamone Adam' which means the first human being is Adam, behave with principle and run the teachings of Samin (Nikmah 2022), (Wijoyo 2011).

Based on the explanation, it was found that Lasiyo, as a Samin tribal leader obtained through observation in the field and interviews during the implementation of *Wayang Kulit Surans*, he emphasized that he should not hurt anyone and should walk straight and honest. This is a manifestation of the religious principles that are firmly held by the Samin people in their lives. In addition, the puppeteer strengthens with the carrying of the play 'Bima Suci' in the *Wayang Kulit Suran* staging.

Through the main character Bima describes the religious principles of the figure in accordance with the Samin Tribe. The puppeteer in the play, the figure of Bima or Raden Werkudara who is performed using black in Javanese is called 'ireng' which means 'envy spiteful human'. On the other hand, the Black Bima character means something that must be owned by a begawan in a wayang story (Tulas'un 2022). This is a proof of religion in the Samin Tribe community, namely in their

lives the principle of envy and envy is not allowed.

**Third, the social and cultural dimension.** The teachings of *Sedulur Sikep Samin* are well integrated into the local community of Dukuh Karangpace, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency. The culture and customs of the Samin people, which have gained national and even international recognition (Purwasito 2003), are characterized by a social life that emphasizes togetherness, consensus-building, communal discussions, mutual assistance, cordial relations among residents, and strong solidarity.

Culturally, the Samin community upholds ancestral heritage and customs that are continuously preserved through various artistic expressions and ritual practices. While their cultural practices share similarities with broader Javanese traditions—such as *Langen Beksan Tayub* performances, *Barong* art, *gasdeso* (earth rituals), shadow puppet theatre, and ascetic practices like *ngrowot* and *deder* fasting (Nikmah 2022)—they remain uniquely imbued with Samin values that stress respect for others and equality among human beings. The principle of universal brotherhood is evident in the Samin community's welcoming, polite, and open attitude toward guests from outside their circle (Mumfangati 2004). Furthermore, the ethical teachings passed down by Samin elders, particularly Mbah Engkrek, explicitly prohibit actions that harm others or the natural environment, such as stealing or taking natural resources

or belongings without permission (Nikmah 2022).

Based on the findings in the field, the procession of *Wayang Kulit Suran* within the Samin community reflects distinctive cultural practices. This can be observed in a series of events that begin with *melekan* (a vigil held prior to the all-night shadow puppet performance). In addition, there are *guyup rukun* activities, where community members work together to prepare food and welcome guests, including visitors from outside the *Sedulur Sikep* circle. (Interview with Sumo Semi, Pendopo Sedulur Sikep Samin, Karangpace Hamlet, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency, Central Java, July 21, 2025).

During the performance, members of the *Sedulur Sikep Samin* community collectively wear black attire with matching headbands, symbolizing unity. They also extend hospitality to guests by inviting them to join the event and offering traditional food, such as *sego jagung* (corn rice), which is served on teak leaves—an emblematic feature of Blora's cultural identity. As explained by Sumo Semi, the tradition of *godong jati* (using teak leaves as food containers) is a distinctive marker of the Samin community's cultural heritage. (Interview, Pendopo Sedulur Sikep Samin, Karangpace Hamlet, Klopoduwur Village, Banjarejo District, Blora Regency, Central Java, July 21, 2025).

## Wayang Kulit Suran as A Medium to Create Harmony and Cultural Innovation

Shadow puppet (*wayang kulit*) performances are routinely held every year during the month of Sura (Muharram). The event is organized as the culmination of *tirakatan* (spiritual meditation) following a forty-day fasting period, which coincides with Monday Wage–Tuesday Kliwon. For the Samin community, the performance serves as a symbolic expression of thanksgiving.

The *Wayang Kulit Suran* was chosen as the central performance of the *Ruwat Agung* event because it embodies symbolic representations of cultural values and moral characters upheld by the Samin people. Moreover, the staging of the shadow puppet aligns with and reinforces the community's deeply rooted values, such as honesty, health, and solidarity, which remain essential to sustaining harmony within both the Samin community and the broader cultural sphere.

The *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance by puppeteer Ki Sujarto, S.Pd. continues to adhere to the traditional structure of shadow puppet theatre, thereby preserving both local culture and the distinctive character of the Samin people. In the staging of the play *Bima Suci*, the sequence of performance follows established conventions, namely:

1. First row (*jejeran awal*): Introduction and orientation of the puppet characters.

2. *Limbukan*: A segment featuring the characters Limbuk and Cangik, serving as comic relief and entertainment, often accompanied by both traditional and contemporary songs.
3. Second row (*jejeran II*) or Paseban Jawi: A scene depicting deliberations and problem-solving among kings, set in the royal square or palace garden.
4. War attempt (*perang gagal*): A battle scene that illustrates conflict but ends in a balanced or inconclusive outcome.
5. *Goro-goro*: The segment in which the puppeteer develops the storyline, often involving the *punakawan* (clown-servants), providing social critique, humor, and philosophical reflection.
6. Third row (*jejeran III*) or Hermitage scene: Events that take place in a hermitage, featuring knights and kings engaged in spiritual or moral encounters.
7. Final scene: The conclusion of the storyline, bringing resolution to the play.
8. *Tancep Kayon*: The planting of the *kayon* puppet, symbolizing the end of the performance (Tulas'un 2022)

Through this sequence, the performance of *Bima Suci* not only entertains but also conveys moral and philosophical values that resonate with the Samin community. On the other hand, innovations in *Wayang Kulit Suran* performances are not limited to the use of traditional *gamelan*

instruments but are also enriched with modern musical instruments. The primary aim of this innovation is to attract the younger generation and encourage their appreciation of traditional culture.

Puppeteer Ki Sujarto, S.Pd. explained that in the staging of *Wayang Kulit Suran*, diatonic instruments such as bass, guitar, and piano are incorporated alongside the traditional pentatonic *gamelan*. According to him,

*"In addition to pentatonic instruments as the main musical accompaniment, we also integrate diatonic instruments to perform modern songs that are highly favored by the younger generation"* (Interview with Ki Sujarto, S.Pd., at his residence in Dukuh Gusten, Jepangrejo Village, Blora District, Blora Regency, Central Java, Monday, July 21, 2025).

In addition, the *wayang kulit* performance is innovatively packaged by the puppeteer through the incorporation of contemporary issues and relevant information. For example, during the performance, the puppeteer highlighted the commemoration of Independence Day, encouraging the community to actively participate as a form of contributing to the meaning of independence.

The performance was staged with the use of *blencong* lighting that, while modernized, still retained its traditional essence. Puppeteer Ki Sujarto, S.Pd. explained that he used *blencong* lights equipped with various color effects produced from electric spotlights.

He noted, *"Traditionally, the blencong used kerosene as its fuel, but it has now been replaced with electric lighting featuring a range of colors."* (Interview with Ki Sujarto, S.Pd., at his residence in Dukuh Gusten, Jepangrejo Village, Blora District, Blora Regency, Central Java, July 21, 2025).

The culture of the Samin community has adapted to the digital era, as reflected in the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance, which is documented through videos and photographs and subsequently shared on social media. This practice demonstrates a form of cultural acculturation, where external influences—such as the perspectives of puppeteers, sponsors, guests, and university students—introduce new ideas while the community continues to uphold its original cultural values. In this context, *Wayang Kulit Suran* serves as an educational medium for the younger generation, offering lessons that integrate elements of art, culture, religion, and character formation, which can be passed on to future generations. Moreover, the performance functions as an intermediary space between the past and the present, fostering social harmony, spiritual reflection, and cultural continuity. At the same time, it represents an innovative strategy for ensuring the preservation and revitalization of cultural heritage for the future.

### **Cultural Acculturation Supports The Preservation of Local Cultures in The Context of Global Challenges, Such As**

## SDG's Targets and Social Change in The Digital

In line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize social, economic, and environmental development through universal, integrated, and inclusive principles encompassing 17 goals and 168 targets, this discussion relates specifically to Goal of 11.4: “*strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.*”

The *Wayang Kulit Suran* tradition represents a concrete manifestation of this target. Its annual performance during the month of Sura (Muharram) demonstrates the preservation of cultural heritage through continuous practice and community participation. Interviews with puppeteers and local residents further reveal that the event receives significant financial support from donors, indicating broader community engagement. At the same time, the tradition reflects cultural acculturation, as the Samin community interacts openly with external groups while continuing to uphold the core values of *Sedulur Sikep*. This balance between openness and cultural preservation underscores how the *Wayang Kulit Suran* contributes to the realization of SDGs Goal of 11.4.

In addition, SDGs Goal of 4.7 emphasizes that by 2030 all learners should acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development. This includes education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights,

gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship, and respect for cultural diversity and cultural contributions to sustainable development. In relation to this, the staging of *Wayang Kulit Suran*—led by a puppeteer with an educational background as an elementary school teacher—provides a more structured and systematic delivery of moral messages, particularly those emphasizing honesty and attentiveness.

This is exemplified by puppeteer Ki Sujarto, S.Pd., who narrates the story of Samin Surosentiko from his birth to his resistance against colonialism in a clear, organized manner, supported by accurate references, similar to the approach he employs when teaching his students.

Furthermore, SDGs Goal of 17.17 highlights the importance of “*encouraging and promoting effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.*” This principle is reflected in the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance, which involves collaboration between the Blora Regency government and various public and private enterprises, including sugar and tobacco companies in Indonesia. These institutions contribute through sponsorship and by setting up booths around the performance venue, thereby demonstrating the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships in supporting cultural sustainability.

## Conclusion

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that

the *Wayang Kulit Suran* performance held by the Samin community in Blora is a form of cultural acculturation that integrates spiritual, social, communicative, and artistic dimensions while remaining rooted in the original values of the Samin tradition. This annual event serves as a medium for transmitting the teachings of Saminism and preserving local identity. From the communication dimension, the performance demonstrates the interaction patterns of the puppeteer in conveying moral messages and social information. The religious dimension is reflected in the cultivation of character values through the figure of Werkudara (Bima).

The socio-cultural dimension is expressed through practices of mutual cooperation, solidarity, and openness to collaboration with other communities. In terms of innovation, *Wayang Kulit Suran* combines traditional and modern elements, such as the integration of gamelan and diatonic instruments, as well as contemporary stage design, while still maintaining its traditional essence. Furthermore, the involvement of multiple stakeholders—including the government, private sector, and community—underscores the broader significance of this tradition.

Accordingly, *Wayang Kulit Suran* embodies the realization of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal of 11.4 on safeguarding cultural heritage, Goal of 4.7 on character education and sustainability, and Goal of 17.17 on multi-stakeholder cooperation. Thus, *Wayang Kulit Suran*

can be regarded as a cultural art form that functions as a medium of education, social cohesion, and cultural preservation, while remaining adaptive to the challenges of digitalization and the dynamics of contemporary society.

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