



Negotiating Heritage: The Institutionalisation and Adaptation of Penadhon in Ponorogo

Aling Madani¹, Johny Alfian Khusyairi^{1*}, dan Samidi¹

¹Faculty of Humanities, University of Airlangga
Surabaya, Jawa Timur, 60286, Indonesia

Article Info

Received on
27 February 2025
Revised on
9 March 2026
Accepted on
19 May 2026
Publish on
30 June 2026

Keywords

Penadhon,
Traditional Outfit,
Reyog,
Warok

DOI:

<http://doi.org/10.31091/mudra.v41i2.3187>



©2026. The Author(s). Published by Pusat Penerbitan LPPM Institut Seni Indonesia Bali. This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY-4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license.

Abstract

This study examined the impact of traditional art and local community engagement on preserving and conserving Ponorogo's traditional outfit, Penadhon. This traditional outfit is unique as it is used and presence appears both art events, Reyog, and in the official life of the people of Ponorogo. Penadhon Therefore, this article intends to look at the roles of the Ponorogo community as an entity in maintaining and preserving this traditional outfit. The questions posed are on the reasons for the origin of Penadhon and how this clothing became popular. The research for this article applied a qualitative approach. Research data was obtained through interviews and tracing printed sources in the form of documents and photos. The secondary sources used for this research. Secondary sources used in this research include books and articles in both printed and digital form. Through the research process, it was discovered that reviving the use of Penadhon was related to respect for the charismatic figure of Ponorogo in the past, Warok. The method used to popularize the use of Penadhon is through Reyog performances, both annually and temporarily, its use on big holidays in Ponorogo, both of which are supported by the big Penadhon wholesale business that occurs both in Java and outside Java.

1. INTRODUCTION

While community participation or engagement is essentially central in the conservation of cultural heritage [1], [2], [3], its practical implementation often reveals underlying tensions between institutional policies and the lived realities of local communities. Scholars argue that effective community involvement enhances the sustainability of heritage conservation efforts and fosters a sense of ownership among local populations. The Elmina Castle project in Ghana and grassroots initiatives in Sweden are frequently cited as successful examples where local engagement has led to enhanced protection measures and strengthened community identity.

Nevertheless, there are both theoretical and practical difficulties with the idea of community engagement. Institutional heritage policies frequently give tangible assets, such as historical sites and landscapes, priority over intangible expressions. The policies lead to

*Correspondence author, Contact(s): johnykhuyairi@fib.unair.ac.id

an inconsistency with local perceptions of heritage [4]. For instance, certain communities like those in Ponorogo may see ordinary cultural expressions, such as traditional clothing (*sandhang*), as equally important types of heritage. This point of view articulates that even when institutional structures may concentrate on maintaining buildings or landscapes. Along with food (*pangan*) and shelter (*papan*), clothing is an essential component of cultural identity and expression for Javanese people [5]. Roland Barthes explained that clothing functions as a system of signs that produce and convey meaning rather than just being a functional item [6]. Traditional clothing serves as an identification marker within this semiotic framework, containing cultural narratives, social hierarchies, and collective ideals. Particularly in a culturally complex setting like Java, where sub-ethnic distinctions (Panaragan, Mataraman, Arèk, Tengger, Pandalungan, Osing) are visually encoded and enacted, these readable inscriptions transmit information about belonging, status, and differentiation [7].

Reyog Ponorogo has mostly been conceptualised through frameworks of performance, ritual, and identification in earlier research, frequently at the expense of examining material culture and embodied practice. The formal components of Reyog as a traditional art form have been the main subject of early foundational work by Kartomi [8], as well as studies by Fauzanafi [9], Kencanasari [10], and Lisbiyanto [11]. These studies have examined features like choreography, music, mask usage, and story structure. Reyog's visual and structural elements are emphasised in these pieces, which place it mainly as a performing spectacle.

Synchronously, a different body of research, including the works of Sugianto [12], Nurdianto [13], Dwijayanto & Rohmatulloh [14], and Hilman et al. [15], views Reyog as an expression of local communal identity or as a community ritual. The social functions of Reyog are examined in these analyses, including how it acts as a symbolic tool for negotiating tradition within Ponorogo society, strengthens links within the community, and distinguishes sub-ethnic identities.

The way they scrutinised Reyog tends to overlook the material and corporeal aspects of heritage, although they have improved comprehension of Reyog's symbolic, performative, and ritualistic value. In particular, the ways that material culture, like traditional Penadhon attire, mediates and concretises Reyog's lived experience receive little consistent attention. This omission is important because, according to material culture theorists [16], [17], [18], items like costumes are essential to the embodiment, performance, and transmission of cultural meaning rather than being merely decorative or supplemental.

Existing research runs the risk of perpetuating a detached understanding of eritage by emphasising Reyog as a textual or symbolic performance, which ignores how identity and tradition are enacted, felt, and negotiated through bodily activities and material artefacts [19], [20]. This theoretical gap highlights the need for an analytical framework that emphasises the interaction between performance, ritual, and the materiality of dress—acknowledging clothing as an active medium through which cultural knowledge is embodied, experienced, and maintained within the community, rather than merely as a marker of identity.

Warok and Penadhon in the Reyog Ponorogo tradition are essential symbols within a continuous process of meaning-making that develops and reflects the Ponorogo community's collective identity, rather than merely cultural artefacts or clothes. Clifford Geertz highlights how cultural forms, such as rituals, performances, and attire, are means by which societies create, convey, and negotiate meaning [21]. With his Penadhon clothing, the Warok represents as an embodied symbol that embodies virtues like knowledge, communal authority, and supernatural power (*kasektèn*). The warok and his attire serve as signifiers within a larger system of symbolic articulation rather than as symbols of a set tradition. The

Penadhon is enacted, mobilised, and understood by both performers and viewers as a visual language of strength, resiliency, and local identity in Reyog performances. The Ponorogo community constantly asserts its uniqueness and sense of belonging through the warok's existence, differentiating itself from nearby areas [22].

The symbolic nature of these components is further highlighted by Reyog's performance aspect as a communal artistic manifestation. The entire performance, including the dance, music, and costumes, functions as a live text that dramatises and re-inscribes societal ideals and historical histories. The continuous usage of Penadhon in ceremonial contexts like Garebeg Suro as well as everyday settings like school ceremonies serves as an example of how meaning is made, shared, and disputed in public settings. The constant negotiation of cultural identity, memory, and social cohesion is made possible by these frequent acts of wearing and displaying penadhon [23]. In this sense, Warok and Penadhon are active members of Ponorogo society's symbolic economy rather than passive custodians of tradition. Their importance stems not just from their historical roots but also from their part in the continuous, collective production and assertion of meaning through a process by which the Ponorogo people interact with, reinterpret, and pass on their cultural legacy to future generations.

The work of local culture in Reyog is best understood not merely as a collection of artistic elements, but as an active and ongoing process of meaning production. Within this system, the traditional Penadhon clothing, both worn by performers and the figure of the Warok, serves as a powerful symbol through which the identity of Ponorogo is continually negotiated, expressed, and reaffirmed. Rather than functioning as a static artifact, the Penadhon becomes a communicative medium, encoding sustainable cultural and historical values that are interpreted and reinterpreted by each generation. The act of wearing penadhon in performances and community events is a collective practice that strengthens local identity and demonstrates the community's ongoing commitment to preserving and transmitting shared historical meanings [24].

More than that, the presence of Penadhon in various public spaces, such as Garebeg Suro celebrations and district commemorations, transforms these occasions into sites where cultural knowledge is enacted and circulated. The widespread and ritualized use of Penadhon in educational settings and daily life further embeds it within the lived experience of the Ponorogo people, ensuring that the meanings attached to it remain dynamic and relevant. Through these practices, penadhon and the figure of the Warok are continually integrated into the community's system of meaning-making, playing an essential role in the ongoing development and understanding of cultural heritage and identity.

Penadhon once was a certain male clothing, the Warok's. Nowadays, it's use becomes more inclusive clothing for it is worn in different agendas and cultural moments. Men and women disregarding their ages, in diverse spatial and temporal contexts, are allowed to wear Penadhon. The institutionalization of Penadhon as typical traditional outfit appears massively in the realm of cultural events, such as ritual activities, Reyog performances, Grebeg Suro. In fact, the regional government is socializing the clothing for administrators of Ponorogo regional government work units, primary and secondary education institutions. The protection and preservation of Penadhon is essentially important as a form of preserving local cultural heritage and fostering awareness of local identity amidst strong current globalization that tends to form a global homogenous culture.

This article discloses how institutionalisation, ritual performance, and community practice interact to create and maintain Penadhon's cultural legitimacy within Reyog and larger Ponorogo traditions. Hence, this article also reveals ways of the Reyog ritual performances serve as mechanisms for embedding Penadhon into the cultural identity of Ponorogo

communities also contribution of community practices and social structures to the maintenance and transmission of Penadhon as a symbol of local cultural heritage. In line with the above problem statements the objectives of this article is (1) to analyze the mechanisms by which institutional, ritual, and communal practices integrate Penadhon into the cultural heritage of Ponorogo, positioning it as a marker of local identity; (2) to examine the dynamic processes through which ritual performance (such as Reyog) and community traditions reinforce the legitimacy and continuity of Penadhon as traditional attire; and (3) to articulate a theoretical understanding of how cultural legitimacy is negotiated and maintained through the interplay of institutionalization, ritual enactment, and community engagement in the context of Ponorogo's cultural preservation efforts.

2. METHODS

This study employs an ethnographic research method to investigate the Reyog tradition and broader cultural practices among the people of Ponorogo, with a particular focus on local knowledge, awareness, and preservation strategies regarding Penadhon, a distinctive form of traditional clothing. Ethnography, as a qualitative research approach, provides a systematic framework for exploring cultural phenomena through direct engagement with the community and their lived experiences [25], [26].

Ethnography is appropriate for conducting this research as its core aim is to uncover the meanings, values, and practices embedded within a cultural context from the perspective of native actors. This aligns with the theoretical underpinnings of interpretive anthropology, which asserts that cultural realities are best understood through immersive participation and dialogue with cultural insiders [21]. By employing participant observation, in-depth interviews, and field notes, this research seeks to capture the emic (insider) perspective of Ponorogo's community members regarding Penadhon.

Furthermore, ethnography enables the researcher to observe not only explicit cultural practices—such as ritual performances and the wearing of Penadhon—but also the implicit norms, values, and strategies that sustain these traditions across generations [27]. The method's iterative and reflexive nature allows for a nuanced understanding of how cultural heritage is negotiated, maintained, and transformed within the local context.

With regard to the problem statements above which focus on how institutionalisation, ritual performance, and community practice interact to maintain and strengthen Penadhon's legitimacy within Ponorogo's Reyog tradition, this research employed focused ethnography. The use of focused ethnographic methodology is particularly appropriate for this study, as it allows for an indepth exploration of specific cultural phenomena, namely, the knowledge, practices, and preservation strategies surrounding Penadhon within the context of Reyog and Ponorogo traditions. Focused ethnography is well-suited to research that targets a clearly defined aspect of social life within a particular community, often leveraging the researcher's prior familiarity and established rapport with local informants [28]. Unlike broader ethnographic approaches that require prolonged immersion, focused ethnography enables intensive data collection over shorter periods and emphasizes the use of multiple data sources, such as participant observation, interviews, and documentary analysis, to yield rich, context-specific insights. Given the study's aim to understand Penadhon as a cultural symbol and community practice within a distinct regional and ritual setting, focused ethnography offers a rigorous and efficient means of capturing the nuanced ways in which cultural identity and heritage are enacted and sustained in Ponorogo.

The research was conducted in Ponorogo, East Java, which serves as the natural setting for these cultural processes. In line with Spradley's methodological framework, the ethnographic approach adopted here involves systematic observation, ongoing engagement

with key informants, and thematic analysis to reveal the complex interplay between tradition, identity, and cultural preservation in Ponorogo [25], [29].

Interviews were conducted with various informants, including: 1) Trustees of the Reyog Ponorogo Foundation; 2) PAKASA Management, of branch Gebang Tinatar Ponorogo; 3) Representative of the Department of Culture, Tourism and Youth and Sports of Ponorogo Regency; 4) Representatives of secondary level educational institutions; and 5) Owners of Penadhon clothing. The interview guide created as unstructured questions from general questions to specific questions. The key informant of this research, Mr. S, facilitated to reach other informants so that we were able to undertake the interviews.

We collected both primary and secondary data through several methods, including field observations, in-depth interviews with diverse informants, and participation in Ponorogo community activities. Additionally, we gathered various forms of documentation, such as photographs and written records, that are relevant to the presence and use of Penadhon. To ensure the validity of our findings, we employed triangulation by cross-verifying information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentary sources. This approach allowed us to identify patterns and discrepancies, and to build a more holistic understanding of Penadhon's cultural significance. Throughout the research process, we remained reflexive regarding our positionality as researchers, acknowledging that our backgrounds, perspectives, and prior relationships with the community could influence data interpretation. By engaging in ongoing self-reflection and being transparent about our roles, we sought to minimize potential bias and maintain the integrity of our analysis.

Initially, all field notes, interview transcripts, and documentary materials were subjected to open coding to identify recurring words, phrases, and cultural terms related to Penadhon and its role in Ponorogo's traditions. In line with Spradley's method, we conducted domain analysis as the first analytical step, grouping data into broad conceptual domains that reflected local cultural meanings, for instance ritual performance, community identity, clothing symbolism [25], [29].

The process was highly iterative: as new data emerged, earlier codes and categories were revisited and refined, ensuring that the analysis remained grounded in participants' perspectives while also accommodating new insights. Thematic analysis was employed to synthesize overarching patterns and themes, linking empirical observations back to the study's theoretical constructs of cultural legitimacy, institutionalization, and heritage preservation. To enhance analytical rigor, we continually compared information across data sources—observations, interviews, and documents—checking for consistency and divergence. This iterative and comparative approach was essential for building credible interpretations and for relating empirical material to broader theoretical frameworks within cultural anthropology.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. *The Society of Ponorogo*

Ponorogo which is situated in the southwestern part of East Java is bordered by several districts of the province of East Java and one district of the province of Central Java (Wonogiri). Ponorogo occupies a geographically distinct area. Its relative distance from the provincial capital, Surabaya, and encirclement by natural and administrative boundaries have contributed to a degree of spatial isolation. This geographic context has fostered the development and preservation of unique cultural identities and traditions, such as Penadhon, by reinforcing community boundaries and shaping local cultural formation.

As the westernmost district of East Java which is directly has border with Central Java, Ponorogo has a unique and distinctive city character compared to other neighbouring regions. Several scholars agreed that the people of Ponorogo have distinctive characteristics as compared to other areas around it [9], [10], [12], [13], [14], [15], [22], [30]. The most striking characteristic is the Reyog, the performing arts which was born and developed in Ponorogo. As a marker of differentiation, Reyog becomes cultural boundary-making. It is not just an art, but also a cultural emblem. Its performance, iconography, and narratives are deeply rooted in Ponorogo's local history and values of which differentiate Ponorogo from neighbouring regions that lack such traditions. In addition, through Reyog, the people of Ponorogo articulate a shared practice and identity which reinforces internal cohesion and a collective sense of self. More than that, the people make use of Reyog to legitimise their cultural heritage.

Ponorogo's cultural identity is presented as an ongoing legacy with a long history. The story asserts the prehistoric origins of the area by combining myth-historical narratives with scientific data, citing Babad Ponorogo VII and archaeological discoveries credited to L. J. C. van Es [31], [32]. This illustrates a tactic of bolstering credibility through the convergence of conventional narratives and empirical evidence while legitimising modern identity through assertions of chronological depth.

Babad Ponorogo VII traces Ponorogo's territorial origins to the Wengker Kingdom [31]. This kingdom formed from migrations led by King Kettu Wijaya of Medang from Central to East Java. Its existence is confirmed by an inscription at Sendang Kamal, Madiun, dating 986-1037 AD. This establishes Ponorogo's historical lineage through migration and kingdom formation, with epigraphic evidence validating early political structures and linking them to the region's enduring cultural heritage.

The Wengker kingdom's decline around 1486 signalled a dramatic shift in power, with Buddhist-influenced authority moving to Kademangan Surukubeng in Kutu Village [32], [33]. The people of Ponorogo acknowledge this time as the formative period before Bathoro Katong arrived, who is credited with founding Ponorogo and bringing Islam. According to local custom and the 1496 AD Sengkalan Memet inscription, a Javanese symbolic method for marking a specific year, this occasion marks the formal start of Ponorogo's government. The inscription may be seen in Setono Village, close to Bathoro Katong's tomb. This reveals a transitional phase from Buddhist-influenced decline to Islamic foundation, where epigraphic evidence and local beliefs construct Ponorogo's political and religious identity, blending historical rupture with cultural continuity.

3.2. Reyog and People's Tradition

Reyog Ponorogo is a traditional art that is inherited to the people of Ponorogo in the form of communal dance and performed such as a ballet dance (interview, Riyadi, 2024). Each participant in the performance assumes a specific character. Warok, Jathil, Bujangganong, Klanasewardana, and Singobarong or Barongan signify distinct positions within the social order of Ponorogo society as shown by their costumes and actions [11], [34]. The Warok, for instance, is traditionally depicted as a strength figure, wisdom, and spiritual authority. His black attire and commanding presence symbolise resilience and leadership. In contrast to the Warok, the Jathil dancers who depict horsemen, often wear more delicate clothing, highlighting a distinction between martial power and refined discipline. Bujangganong, with his humorous and agile gestures, introduces aspects of satire and subversion through his lighthearted and deft gestures. While, the Singobarong mask which has tiger's head covered in peacock feathers serves not only as an artistic icon but also as a visual metaphor for power and majesty. The effort required to carry and animate the mask underscores physical

pro prowess and endurance, qualities revered in the Penadhon tradition, which values personal discipline and communal responsibility.

There are many plots of stories performed in Reyog performance [34]. There are two versions of legends that have developed and used for a plot, namely the Bantarangin and the Suryongalam or Ki Ageng Kutu legends [35]. The Bantarangin focuses on the story of King Klanasewandana of the Bantarangin Kingdom who proposed to Princess Sanggalangit of the Kediri Kingdom. Meanwhile, the Suryongalam contains criticism and satire of Suryongalam's politics from the Wengker Kingdom towards King Brawijaya V who was considered heavily under controlled by his queen. Furthermore, the Reyog was developed until the beginning of Islamization period in Java by King Katong (Bathoro Katong), the first duke of Ponorogo who reigned at the end of the 15th century. At that time, reyog was used as a medium for spreading Islam in Ponorogo [35]. Through these enduring narratives, Reyog not only preserves and transmits cultural values across generations but also upholds the symbolic authority and distinct identity of the Warok, reinforcing their role as custodians of tradition within Ponorogo society.

The transformation of Reyog into a festivalised form illustrates how festivalisation serves as a mechanism for both institutionalizing and commodifying cultural practices. Since 1997, Reyog has moved beyond its traditional role as local entertainment to become a centerpiece of the Festival Nasional Reyog Ponorogo (FNRP), a structured event designed to enhance community welfare and promote Reyog as a hallmark of Ponorogo's cultural heritage on a national scale [35]. By integrating Reyog into the Grebeg Suro festivities, which mark the Javanese New Year, a convergence of Hindu and Islamic calendrical traditions [36], the festival not only institutionalises Reyog within formal celebratory frameworks but also aligns it with broader narratives of identity and cultural continuity.

The festivalisation process is further evidenced in the scale and organization of contemporary celebrations. In 2024, the FNRP spanned ten days (27 June - 6 July), featuring 32 Reyog groups representing various regions, schools, universities, and community organizations across Indonesia. In addition, the inclusion of 20 junior high school and dance studio groups in the Youth Reyog Festival (formerly Mini Reyog Festival) highlights efforts to engage younger generations and broaden participation. While such institutionalised festivals can risk commodifying Reyog, potentially transforming it into a standardized performance for broader consumption, they also stabilise and renew its cultural significance by providing a prominent platform for the expression and transmission of tradition. Thus, festivalisation both transforms Reyog by adapting it to new contexts and audiences, as well as stabilises its cultural meaning by reaffirming its role in communal identity and heritage.

The Javanese New Year celebration (1 Suro) in Ponorogo reveals distinct ritual logics and identity strategies compared to the central Javanese centers of Yogyakarta and Surakarta. In Yogyakarta, the New Year is marked by solemn rituals such as Topo Bisu (silent meditation), Mubeng Bètèng (circumambulation of the royal fort), Gunung Tumpeng offerings, sea alms, and the ritual cleansing (*jamasan*) of heirloom weapons, especially the Keris. Surakarta's celebrations include the Pusaka Dalem carnival, the Kebo Bulé (sacred albino buffalo) parade, and the Gunung procession [37]. These central Javanese traditions emphasize royal authority, cosmological order, and the sacredness of heirlooms, reinforcing the legitimacy and continuity of the palace-centered culture.

While Ponorogo incorporates some similar elements, such as heirloom processions (Bedhol Pusaka), heirloom cleansing ceremonies (*jamasan* pusaka Bathoro Katong and Bantarangin), pilgrimages to ancestral graves, and communal prayers, the region distinguishes itself by integrating unique local practices. Notably, the Grebeg Suro in Ponorogo features the larung Buceng Agung (the floating of a giant rice cone on Lake Ngebel), shadow puppet

performances, and, most distinctively, the organization of the National Reyog Ponorogo Festival. This large-scale Reyog festival sets Ponorogo apart, emphasizing communal participation and cultural spectacle as central to its identity strategy.

Ponorogo's approach, therefore, reflects a hybrid ritual logic: while it preserves traditional elements seen in the royal centers, it also foregrounds performative, inclusive, and region-specific practices. By elevating Reyog to the heart of New Year festivities, Ponorogo asserts a distinct communal identity that is both rooted in Javanese tradition and dynamically localised. This suggests that Ponorogo's celebrations are not only about cultural preservation but also about actively producing and negotiating local identity within the broader Javanese cultural sphere.

Participation in Suroan, the Javanese New Year celebration in Ponorogo, serves not merely as a cultural tradition but as a powerful mechanism for reinforcing collective identity among the people of Ponorogo. Since the 1970s, the act of gathering on the night of 1 Suro and walking together toward the city center has become a recurring, embodied practice that reaffirms communal belonging and shared values [38]. This collective movement, marked by widespread participation and anticipation, renders the community of Penadhon highly visible, both to insiders and external observers. The performative element of clothing is essential to this tradition. Wearing the black attire associated with the Warok is not simply a visual or aesthetic choice. Instead, it is an act of symbolic reproduction that enacts and sustains the legacy of the Warok within contemporary society. The clothing becomes a form of embodied identity, where the act of wearing it signals not only affiliation with the tradition, but also a lived experience of its values, strength, wisdom, and resilience. In this sense, clothing functions as a performative identity, materialising collective memory and connecting present participants with ancestral figures and meanings.



Figure 1. Celebration of 1 Suro night at the Alun-Alun Ponorogo
[Source: Documentation of 2024 Grebeg Suro Committee]

The annual Suroan procession, therefore, is a site where identity is not only displayed but actively constructed through embodied practices (Figure 1). Participants become tradition, rather than merely observing or witnessing it. The Warok ethos is symbolically perpetuated for future generation through their dance, clothing, and social gatherings. The identity of Penadhon and the spirit of Warok remain relevant and adaptable to contemporary contexts by this ongoing re-embodiment. The next generation of Warok inherit the strong power of Warok which is not only physical or magical power, but also wisdom. [39]. The tradition to keep Warok alive among people of Ponorogo is closely connected to a social association or community known as Konco Reyog [40], [41].

The importance of Warok spiritual inheritance in the community is making him a local charismatic elite figure in Ponorogo as they earned personal magnetism, spiritual potency, and communal recognition [40], [41]. Charismatic leaders are perceived as possessing exceptional insight or abilities that set them apart from ordinary people, and this belief forms the basis of their authority [42]. The Warok who once revered as a charismatic elite whose authority stemmed from embodied tradition and communal recognition, became

increasingly associated with political office and procedural authority. In the second half of 1970s, Regent Sumadi appointed many of them to be village or urban village heads. This decision slowly removed the essential existence of Warok, because they later be replaced by young politicians or officials who only replace their modern or administrative roles without having the essence of Warok's power which is actually beyond this kind of administrative capabilities [5]. As the Warok's role shifted to that of a political officeholder, As the charismatic status of the warok declined, so did the sacredness of the ceremonial attire traditionally worn by them, known as the Penadhon. The warok's role as village head, a position within the ordinary administrative hierarchy, gradually encouraged others to dare to wear the ceremonial attire traditionally worn by the warok, Penadhon, which subsequently became more popular.

Current Warok identity is often connected to wearing Warok's clothing, both in rituals and traditions as well as performance of Reyog [10], [30], [34]. T. G. Svenson argued that identification of when and how certain clothing is worn can be determined ethnically of which it becomes a means of articulation of meaning from the wearer of the clothing perspective that refers to sub-identities, culture, social and regional [43]. In Svensson's framework, Penadhon can be understood as a semiotic system in which clothing functions not only as physical protection but as a communicative code that constructs and differentiates social identity within Ponorogo society. The strategic use and display of Penadhon in various contexts, rituals, public performances like Reyog, and daily interactions, transform the clothing into a set of culturally recognized signs. Each component of Penadhon, from fabric and color to patterns and accessories, carries symbolic weight that signals Warok identity and distinguishes its wearers from others in the community [10], [30], [34]. The timing and manner in which Penadhon is worn further encode nuanced layers of meaning, reflecting not only ethnic and cultural belonging, but also social differentiation such as hierarchy, status, and specific roles within the Warok tradition. As a visible marker, Penadhon communicates collective knowledge and values, while simultaneously delineating boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. This process enables Penadhon to act as a living cultural text, reinforcing the transmission of historical identity and perpetuating social stratification within Ponorogo's cultural landscape.

3.3. Tradition of Wearing Penadhon by the People of Ponorogo

Penadhon shows as a performative marker of identity and a dynamic medium of cultural reproduction in Ponorogo society. The people of Ponorogo maintain the tradition of wearing distinctive traditional clothing, which is prominently displayed in various cultural activities. They wear an all-black suit, shirt and trousers with red pleats on both sleeves and collar as well as on the bottom of the right and left legs. They also wear white drawstring ornaments used on the waist, and a Blangkon (headband) to cover the head (Figure 2).

Penadhon was once commonly referred to as the Gothil shirt or waist cut shirt (klambi potong gulon), signifying a "shirt without a collar at the neck" (interviews, Sunarso & Riyadi, 2024). Nowadays, while the official term Penadhon is widely used, many still refer to the suit as Gothil or Klambi Warok (Warok's Clothing), directly linking it to the legendary Warok figure. This act of naming not only encodes a sense of authenticity and continuity but also positions Warok clothing as a symbol of local identity and moral authority within Ponorogo society. The naming also illustrates how naming



Figure 2. Penadhon Worn by the People of Ponorogo [Source: The courtesy of writers, 2024]

practices themselves function as mechanisms of symbolic authority, continually shaping and reinforcing the garment's cultural meaning. Associating Penadhon with the Warok amplifies its symbolic power, as the Warok is regarded as an emblematic character deeply embedded in Ponorogo's collective memory which become oral traditions and generational storytelling [10], [30]. The Reyog performance becomes a vital stage where Warok identity is both introduced and reiterated to the public, making the performance a key ritual for the transmission and reproduction of collective memory [38]. Through these performances, Penadhon becomes a visual cue that anchors and revives the legendary status of the Warok, allowing new generations to access, interpret, and sustain this heritage.

The commoners of Ponorogo imagine Warok simply as a figure who always wears black suit and accessories from headband to pants who always present in Reyog performance (interview, Sunarso, 2024). Although authentic Warok figures are increasingly rare and often regarded as relics of the past, existing Warok groups continue to command respect and legitimacy as charismatic elders within Ponorogo society [11]. This scarcity transforms Penadhon into a potent emblem, allowing collective memory and cultural ideals associated with the Warok to persist and circulate symbolically. Through ritual events and performances, the act of wearing Penadhon enables individuals and communities to embody and invoke the revered image of the Warok. In other words, the events or festivities demonstrate how the decline in actual Warok figures paradoxically strengthens the clothing's function as a key instrument of cultural reproduction and symbolic authority.

Moerany divides the use of Penadhon in Ponorogo into several categories [44]. Those of the clothing actually relevant to the societal arrangement and complex social system of the society of Ponorogo. Social categories such as gender, social strata, age, etc. Apart from that, the social context of wearing Penadhon is also influenced by condition and function of event.

Figure 3 shows the use of the Warok's traditional clothing, Penadhon. As the traditional clothing of the Warok, Penadhon operates as a complex system of visual codes that signals social stratification, ritual function, and the increasing influence of institutional standardisation. The structure and ornamentation of Penadhon clothing are deeply symbolic, with variations in fabric, color, accessories, and style marking distinctions in age, status, and social role. For example, older Warok don more elaborate accessories (such as pocket watches, staves, and specific keris), while younger Warok and Warokan (followers) wear simpler combinations, reflecting an internal hierarchy and ritual role differentiation [34].

This stratification is further institutionalized through government-mandated categories that regulate the use of Penadhon in both formal and ceremonial contexts. The regency's formalization of clothing types—distinguishing nobility from commoners and providing explicit dress codes for ceremonies and everyday life—illustrates a deliberate standardization that reinforces social boundaries and cultural continuity. Ritual significance is heightened by the use of particular elements (such as the Pancalan headband for those believed to possess supernatural abilities) and the



Figure 3. A Warok is wearing Penadhon

[Source: Documentation of Regional Inventarisasi dan Dokumentation Project (Traditional Clothing of East Java)]

encoding of mystical functions in accessories like the Kolor, which may contain amulets. Collectively, these practices not only reinforce traditional social hierarchies but also ensure that Penadhon functions as a visible marker of institutional authority, cultural identity, and the ritual logic that underpins Ponorogo society.

In addition, the regency government determines some other decision in relation with the presentation of Penadhon in several situation which covers both men and women [44] as follows.

Table 1. Patterns in Penadhon Clothing

Category	Clothing Elements	Markers of Stratification/Ritual Role	of Institutional Standardisation
Old Warok	Wakthung shirt, Gejigan trousers, Jarik with lar-laran, stagen, plain black Epek Timang, Gabelan keris, pocket watch, Iket Modang headband, stick	Elaborate, with status-symbol accessories and mystical tools	Regency-defined, ceremonial code
Young Warok	Maro Gares Kombor trousers, Jarik with lar-laran, Othok belt, Udheng Gadhung Melati headband, Penadhon shirt, Gabelan Keris	Simpler, with youth-specific headband and less ornamentation	Regency-defined, transitional role
Warokan (followers)	Wakthung shirt, Maro Gares Kombor trousers, Udheng Gadhung Melati headband	Minimal, signaling subordinate status	Institutional recognition of supporting roles
Nobility (men)	Wakthung shirt, Kuthungan, Maro Gares Kombor trousers, Udheng, Jarik, Epek belt, Perde, Gabelan Keris	Formal, with refined accessories and motifs	Official dress code for ceremonies
Commoners (men)	Black Kuthung shirt (red stripes), Jemblek, drawstring trousers, Udheng, Othok belt	Markers of marital status and social class	Simplified, standardized for wider use
Ceremonial (commoners)	Wakthung shirt, Jarik, Slindur belt, Epek belt, Keris, Udheng	For ritual occasions, emphasizing tradition	Clearly defined attire for rituals
Daily wear (men)	Maro Gares trousers, Kolor, Othok belt, Udheng	Practical, but motif and accessories still encode role/status	Standardized for everyday social display

Table 1 shows the variety and regulation of Penadhon attire demonstrate how clothing encodes layers of social differentiation, ritual purpose, and institutional authority, transforming dress into a living archive of Ponorogo's hierarchical and cultural order.

The symbolic elements of Penadhon clothing are not only visual markers but actively shape the embodied practices and moral subjectivities of those who wear them. The dominance of black in Penadhon attire, for instance, extends beyond representing charisma and tranquility; it is internalized through the discipline required to embody restraint and self-control. In practice, the act of wearing black becomes a daily rehearsal of composure and the suppression of impulsive desires (*Aluamah* lust), aligning the body with the Warok's ideal of authority tempered by self-mastery. The red stripes or folds on the sleeves and collar, symbolizing courage, further discipline the wearer to enact bravery tempered by

emotional regulation, qualities central to the Warok identity as one who can control anger and authority. Similarly, the use of white in the Kuthung shirt and drawstring, representing purity of intention and the pursuit of goodness (*Mutmainah* lust), becomes embodied in the wearer's comportment, encouraging actions motivated by higher moral goals. The yellow accents, signifying worldly desire and the need for its management (*Sufiyah* lust), act as reminders of the tension between spiritual aspirations and material pursuits, shaping a moral subjectivity that balances both [34].

The attributes of Penadhon, such as the Mondolan Blangkon with its jasmine Gadhung motif, further reinforce these embodied ideals. The headband's symbolism of controlling harmful desires is physically enacted by wearing it, a gesture that reinforces self-restraint and social responsibility. The folds on the Blangkon, echoing human ears, and the sharp, downward-pointing forehead crease, prompt wearers to cultivate attentive listening and focused intention. Udheng means *mudheng* in Javanese or 'comprehend or understand', that is humans should have good skills and basic knowledge (interview, Riyadi, 2024). Those attributes represent practices that discipline not only the body but the mind.

These symbolic meanings are both internalised through repeated ritual and social performance, and reproduced as each generation wears the clothing and enacts its associated virtues. Yet, these meanings are not entirely stable; as social contexts evolve, contestation and reinterpretation may emerge, with younger generations or changing social roles potentially transforming or challenging traditional associations. In sum, Penadhon clothing operates as a lived semiotic system, producing disciplined bodies and moral selves while continually negotiating the transmission and transformation of its symbolic order.



Figure 4. Penadhon clothing used in Kirab Bedhol Pusaka (Left) and An Old Warok clothing in Reyog Performance (Right)

[Source: The courtesy of Writers dan Buku Pedoman Dasar Kesenian Reyog Ponorogo]

The ongoing adaptation of Penadhon in traditional ceremonial activities, such as the heirloom Bedhol and carnival, exemplifies a complex negotiation between the imperatives of tradition and the demands of modernity. Whereas the original Penadhon signified the official clothing of the nobility (Figure 4), its contemporary forms have been modified for practicality and accessibility, making it relevant and functional for daily life and a range of institutional contexts, including government, education, and public celebrations. This transformation is evident in the adoption of simplified components such as Wakthung shirts, Kombor trousers, white t-shirts, Othok belts, drawstrings, and Blangkon, which together streamline the attire for broader participation and ease of use (Figure 2).

This adaptive process proves a pragmatic response to changing social realities and a deliberate strategy for cultural sustainability. On one hand, adaptation strengthens cultural meaning by ensuring that Penadhon remains visible, recognisable, and integrated within daily and institutional practices. By making Penadhon more accessible, adaptation democratises its symbolism, allowing a wider spectrum of society to participate in traditions that were once exclusive to the nobility or select ritual actors. This fosters a sense of shared identity and cultural continuity, linking present generations to their historical roots in ways that resonate with contemporary lifestyles.

On the other hand, the process of adaptation inevitably involves a degree of dilution or transformation of original meanings. As ceremonial dress is simplified and incorporated into everyday settings, some of its esoteric or hierarchical symbolism may be lost or reinterpreted. The shift from exclusive, status-laden regalia to more utilitarian and standardised forms can erode the distinctions that once defined social stratification or ritual authority. Moreover, the commodification and institutionalization of Penadhon through its use in governmental and educational settings may recast it as a symbol of civic or regional identity rather than as a vessel for complex ritual and mystical values.

Ultimately, adaptation is not a linear process of loss or preservation, but a dynamic negotiation in which cultural meanings are continually contested, renegotiated, and reframed. The ongoing modification of Penadhon thus reflects the community's efforts to balance reverence for tradition with the practicalities and values of modern life. Whether this strengthens or dilutes cultural meaning depends on the perspectives and intentions of those engaged in the process: for some, adaptation represents a creative revitalization that ensures cultural endurance; for others, it may signal a shift toward surface-level symbolism at the expense of deeper ritual significance. In either case, the evolving practice of wearing Penadhon demonstrates how tradition is not static, but a living resource continually reworked to meet the needs of the present.

3.4. Conservation and Preservation of Penadhon

The name of Ponorogo originated traditional performance then was corrected by adding Y in the Reog word, so it becomes Reyog. This traditional performance was included in the Objects for Cultural Advancement (Objek Pemajuan Kebudayaan, OPK) in traditions and oral expressions, performing arts, traditional skills domain. More than official appreciation of Reyog, this performing arts has become a folk art that grows and rooted of society in and of Ponorogo. This existence of 367 Ponorogo Reyog communities in Ponorogo, 167 Reyog groups across Indonesia, 5 Reyog overseas groups in the United States, the Netherlands, Korea, Japan and Hong Kong, as well as 8 Reyog groups in Malaysia proved the unwritten existence of Reyog [35].

The legal recognition of Reyog Ponorogo as Indonesia's Intangible Cultural Heritage (Warisan Budaya Takbenda, WBTb) in 2013 marks a significant shift in the cultural status of Reyog and, by extension, the associated Penadhon [45]. This act of state designation operates as a powerful form of cultural authorisation, bestowing official legitimacy and value upon these traditions while embedding them within a national framework of heritage governance. The government's commitment, articulated in Act Number 5 of 2017 [46] on the Advancement of Culture (Article 22 Paragraph 1):

“Pemerintah Pusat dan/atau Pemerintah Daerah wajib melakukan pengamanan Objek Pemajuan Kebudayaan (The Central Government and/or Regional Governments are obliged to safeguard Objects for the Advancement of Culture)”

The article legally obligates both central and regional authorities to safeguard designated cultural objects. This legal mandate transforms Reyog and Penadhon from living local

practices into regulated heritage objects subject to state oversight, formal documentation, and preservation strategies.

As a result, Reyog Ponorogo and its material expressions, including Penadhon clothing, are systematically recorded in the Ministry of Education and Culture's Integrated Cultural Data Collection System (Sistem Pendataan Kebudayaan Terpadu, SPKT) and are protected under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, as evidenced by Creation Registration Letter Number 000192153 of 2020 [47]. This process not only elevates Reyog and Penadhon to the level of national symbols but also imposes standardized definitions, practices, and protocols for their presentation and transmission. While legal recognition can enhance the visibility, protection, and sustainability of cultural heritage, it also brings about a transformation in meaning, recasting these traditions as objects of public policy, intellectual property, and collective identity, rather than solely as dynamic, lived practices. The transition from community-based performance to regulated heritage thus reflects the dual role of legal authorization: it protects and authorizes cultural expressions, but also subjects them to new forms of regulation and institutional control.

The relationship between Reyog and the Warok figure is foundational, with Warok historically occupying central roles in the performance and serving as a living embodiment of its values and authority [8]. Traditionally, the Warok's distinctive black attire, Penadhon, was a marker of their presence and influence within the performance. However, as real Warok figures become increasingly rare, their physical absence has given rise to a process of symbolic substitution, wherein clothing takes on the role of preserving and projecting Warok identity.

Through the continued use and visibility of Penadhon in Reyog performances and public cultural life, Penadhon represents as a powerful surrogate for the Warok, maintaining their symbolic presence even as the actual figures recede into legend (interview, Sunarso, 2024). This substitution is not merely representational but is actively sustained by communal practices of cultural transmission. Knowledge, values, and historical associations linked to the Warok are internalized and reproduced through the ritualized wearing, teaching, and adaptation of Penadhon attire. In this way, the people of Ponorogo enact a form of cultural resilience, using clothing as a vehicle for the ongoing preservation and embodiment of Warok identity within contemporary society. Thus, even as the Warok as a living figure becomes a distant memory, Penadhon clothing ensures that their symbolic authority and legacy remain embedded in the social fabric. The community's capacity to adapt and integrate Penadhon into diverse cultural contexts enables the continual renewal of heritage, allowing the Warok's presence to persist through symbolic means, despite the decline of the figure itself.

The Penadhon dressing tradition continues up until this day. The latest moment of wearing Penadhon in the 2024 Ponorogo Regency Anniversary celebration. The Ponorogo government issued a circular number 400.6.3.1/KH/2001/405.08/2024 on an obligation to wear Penadhon in the regency's birthday. All employees of the Regency, of different organizations, regional companies, universities are obliged to wear Penadhon in working hours for 7 days, from 5 to 11 August 2024. The conditions for wearing the clothing is, men are wearing Penadhon and Gadung Blangkon Melati. Meanwhile, women wear Penadhon companion clothing. Such an obligation also appeared during the 2024 Grebeg Suro celebration. This obligation is actually official instruction which benefitted to preserve and conserve local traditional clothing, traditional performing arts, and maintaining the existence of Warok as a respected figure other anniversary of Ponorogo.

The enactment of Ponorogo Regent Regulation Number 68 of 2021 [48] illustrates the increasing role of policy as a tool of cultural governance, shaping how tradition is expressed, regulated, and instrumentalized within the public sphere.

“Selain Pakaian Dinas sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) terdapat Pakaian Dinas lainnya yaitu Pakaian Khas Ponorogo. (Article 3 (2)) (Apart from the official clothing as referred to in paragraph (1), there are other official clothing, namely typical Ponorogo clothing)”

This article then clarifies that Article 11 Paragraph 1 states when the typical Ponorogo clothing must wear.

“Pakaian Khas Ponorogo sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 3 ayat (2) digunakan ASN pada peringatan hari jadi Pemerintah Kabupaten Ponorogo, perayaan Grebeg Suro, dan hari-hari lain yang ditentukan lebih lanjut (Typical Ponorogo clothing as intended in Article 3 paragraph (2) is used by ASN (civil servants) on the anniversary of the Ponorogo Regency Government, the Grebeg Suro celebration, and other days to be further determined)”

By formally designating “typical Ponorogo clothing” as part of the official attire for State Civil Servants (ASN), the regulation standardises when and how cultural dress, rooted in the legacy of Warok and Reyog, is to be worn. The policy mandates the use of this attire during significant civic and cultural events, such as the regency’s anniversary and Grebeg Suro, as well as on other occasions determined by the state.

Through such legal provisions, the state intervenes to selectively codify tradition, drawing on the Pedoman Dasar Kesenian Reyog Ponorogo (Basic Guidelines for Reyog Ponorogo Arts) to specify precise clothing categories for civil servants. The regulation prescribes old Warok clothing for high-ranking officials and young Warok attire for other employees, detailing specific garments and accessories that must be worn. Old Warok clothing is an obligation for officials at Echelon III level and above in accordance with clothing regulations, including: Gejigan Trousers; black-based long cloth; Stagen; plain black Epek Timang; Gabelan keris; Wakthung clothes; pocket watch; white Kolor; Iket Modang; and slips. Youth warok clothing is an obligation for all employees within the Regional Government with provisions, including: black Kombor trousers; long cloth with black-based color; Othok belt; white color; Blangkon Gadhung Melati; Gabelan keris; and Penadhon. For female employees, the policy dictates batik with distinct Ponorogo motifs. This process of bureaucratic prescription transforms traditional clothing into a regulated heritage object, subject to institutional logic and administrative uniformity.

As a consequence, cultural expression becomes standardized, with the risk of reducing fluid, community-based practices to official symbolism managed through state apparatus. The instrumentalization of Penadhon and related clothing for state functions can reinforce regional identity and cultural pride, but may also constrain the organic evolution and contextual flexibility of tradition. State intervention thus acts as both a mechanism of preservation and a force of normalization, embedding tradition within the structures of governance while potentially narrowing the range of its lived meanings and uses in contemporary society.

Along with current developments, the distribution of forms of use of Ponoragan traditional clothing adapt to the contextual situation. The adaptation of Ponoragan traditional clothing, such as the Penadhon, highlights an ongoing negotiation between tradition and modernity. It reflects changing in social conditions and cultural flexibility. Influenced by factors like practical needs, religious beliefs, socioeconomic shifts, and exposure to global cultures, traditional attire is reinterpreted to fit contemporary contexts. For example, women now

wear Penadhon clothing at exhibitions, ceremonies, and school events, roles traditionally reserved for men. This evolution not only preserves cultural heritage but also demonstrates the community's ability to remain relevant and responsive to societal changes, illustrating how tradition and modernity can coexist through adaptation.



Figure 5. Women Wear Penadhon

[Source: The Courtesy of Writers (Left) and Photo Album Collection of SMPN 1 Ponorogo (Right)]

Educational institutionalisation acts as a formal mechanism for transmitting and standardising cultural knowledge. It is demonstrated by the Indonesian government's regulations regarding school uniforms and traditional clothing. Regulation Number 50 of 2022 [49]:

“Selain pakaian seragam Sekolah dan Pakaian Seragam Khas Sekolah sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 3, Pemerintah Daerah sesuai kewenangannya dapat mengatur pengenaan pakaian adat bagi Peserta Didik pada Sekolah (Apart from school uniforms and typical school uniforms as referred to in Article 3, the Regional Government has authority to regulate the wearing of traditional clothing for students at school)”

The regulation grants regional governments the authority to organize when and how students wear traditional clothing, specifying that such attire is worn on designated traditional days or events. This codification ensures that cultural practices are systematically integrated into school routines, making the transmission of cultural heritage deliberate and consistent across educational settings.

The decision on the time for wearing traditional clothing is regulated in accordance to the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 50 of 2022 [49] concerning on School Uniforms for Students at Primary and Secondary Education Levels in Chapter II Article 10 Paragraph 3. It is stated that “Students wear traditional clothing on certain traditional days or events”.

Schools, communities, and society in this case have a big role in efforts to preserve and coserve traditional clothing. Article 12 (2) explains that: “The central government, regional government have authority, to provide school uniforms and traditional clothing for students by prioritizing economically disadvantaged students.”. These regulations address issues of equity and accessibility by requiring that assistance in procuring traditional clothing be prioritised for economically disadvantaged students, while also prohibiting schools from imposing unnecessary financial burdens on families (Article 13). Through these institutional policies, cultural knowledge is not only preserved but also formalised and made accessible, reinforcing its importance and relevance within contemporary education and society.

An application of this regulation has done by SMPN 2 Kauman during the Dakapo Festival, SMP Negeri 2 Kauman Ponorogo Festival. The festival held to exhibitit the P5 (Proyek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila, Project for Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile) works of students. The festival shows cultural exhibition and local UMKM (Usaha Mikro, Kecil dan Menengah; Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) products. In this festival which was held on March 5 2024, the school issued a policy calls "Launching Thursday Ponoragan". Thus, the festival was held to be a kick off for "the Thursday Ponoragan" in which all school members are required to wear the typical Ponoragan clothes, Penadhon, every last Thursday of the month (interview, Kartikasari, 2024). This obligation is integrated to the P5 material in schools. The obligation to wear Penadhon is a policy that is expected to increase the interest and awareness of younger generation to aware of their historical background, values.

The involvement of UMKM (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) in producing and distributing Penadhon clothing represents the commodification of culture, where traditional attire becomes a marketable product. Enterprises like UD. Stama Langgeng "Parikesit" not only sell Penadhon and related cultural crafts locally and across Indonesia, but also actively participate in raising public awareness about the importance of preserving cultural identity (interview with Christanto, 2024). By collaborating with schools and government agencies to supply Penadhon for exhibitions and festivals, UMKM help integrate traditional clothing into public life (interview, Christanto, 2024). However, this economic circulation introduces tensions between commercial interests and cultural authenticity. While the commodification of Penadhon can promote wider recognition and accessibility, there is an inherent risk that traditional meanings and practices may be diluted or altered to meet market demands. Balancing the financial benefits of cultural products with the preservation of their original significance remains a key challenge, highlighting the complex relationship between economic development and the safeguarding of cultural heritage.



Figure 6. Modification of Penadhon
[Source: The Courtesy of Writers]

Innovations in Penadhon design, such as shorter sleeves, Shanghai-style collars, embroidered peacock feathers, and group insignias, reflect an ongoing dialogue between tradition and modernity. These modifications can be seen as a form of continuity, ensuring that Penadhon remains relevant and embraced by younger generations. However, they may also signal a partial dilution or transformation of original meanings, as practical and aesthetic choices reshape traditional forms to suit contemporary tastes and collective identities. This process highlights the complex ways innovation negotiates the balance between preserving heritage and accommodating change (Figure 6).

Modification of Penadhon clothing, driven by collaboration among the Regional Government, UMKM, cultural institutions, Reyog communities, and society, serves as a dynamic site of cultural negotiation. Through events like Grebeg Suro and the Ponorogo Regency Anniversary, this traditional clothing is continually reintroduced and adapted, while UMKM benefit from increased business opportunities (interview, Christanto, 2024). The rise of online sales platforms, influenced by rapid technological advances and popular culture, accelerates both the distribution and transformation of Penadhon, yet also presents challenges for smaller enterprises with limited resources (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Community Wear Modified Penadhon
[Source: The courtesy of Writers]

4. CONCLUSION

The preservation of Penadhon as Ponorogo's traditional clothing emerges not simply from isolated efforts, but through the interaction of institutional, cultural, and economic domains that together form a system of cultural governance. Festivals such as the annual Reyog performance do more than celebrate local heritage; they function as performative acts of social reproduction, reinforcing traditional values and collective memory. Government policies. This is reflected from official mandates for wearing Penadhon during significant civic events. The mandates exemplify the institutionalisation of tradition, embedding cultural practices within formal regulatory frameworks. Schools further codify this heritage through routine requirements, integrating Penadhon into the fabric of everyday educational life and ensuring intergenerational transmission. Meanwhile, the business sector, through UMKM, commodifies and circulates Penadhon both locally and nationally, demonstrating how economic mechanisms can support, but also potentially reshape, cultural authenticity.

These domains do not operate in isolation. Rather, their interplay constitutes a dynamic system in which preservation is achieved through both formal and informal mechanisms, negotiation, and adaptation. This synthesis highlights that the conservation of Penadhon is not merely about safeguarding an artifact, but about negotiating meaning, authority, and identity across institutional boundaries. Theoretically, this case illustrates how cultural governance operates through the convergence of state policy, educational institutionalization, ritual performance, and market forces. Empirically, it demonstrates the capacity of local actors to mobilise and adapt tradition in response to shifting social contexts. Future research should further examine tensions between commodification and authenticity, the impact of digital economies on tradition, and the ways in which such systems of cultural preservation might be replicated or challenged in other regions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are grateful to the Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi the financial support. The support facilitates the achievement of our academic curiosity about the existence and sustainability of Penadhon which became our focus of our research. We deeply appreciate this support is a realisation of the ministry's commitment to develop and promote education, culture, research, and technology in Indonesia.

The authors also acknowledge the use of the Quillbot for improving grammar, paraphrasing sentences and paragraphs, and overall writing quality. While all interpretations and conclusions are solely those of the authors, the support provided by this Artificial Intelligence tool contributed to the technical implementation and clarity of the manuscript.

REFERENCES

- [1] J. Li, S. Krishnamurthy, A. Pereira Roders, and P. van Wesemael, "Community participation in cultural heritage management: A systematic literature review comparing Chinese and international practices," *Cities*, 2020, doi: 10.1016/j.cities.2019.102476.
- [2] E. Koeping, "Van Klinken, Minorities, Modernity and the Emerging Nation: Christians in Indonesia, a Biographical Approach," *Studies in World Christianity*, 2003, doi: 10.3366/swc.2003.9.2.297.
- [3] N. A. Abdul Aziz, N. F. Mohd Ariffin, N. A. Ismail, and A. Alias, "Community Participation in the Importance of Living Heritage Conservation and Its Relationships with the Community-Based Education Model towards Creating a Sustainable Community in Melaka UNESCO World Heritage Site," *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 2023, doi: 10.3390/su15031935.
- [4] L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- [5] M. Misbahuddin and A. M. Sholihah, "Pakaian Sebagai Penanda: Kontruksi Identitas Budaya dan Gaya Hidup Masyarakat Jawa (2000-2016)," *El Wasathiya Jurnal Studi Agama*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 113-133, 2018.
- [6] R. Barthes, *Fashion System*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.
- [7] A. Sutarto and S. Y. Sudikan, Eds., *Pemetaan Kebudayaan di Provinsi Jawa Timur: Sebuah Upaya Pencarian Nilai-Nilai Positif*. Jember: Pemerintah Provinsi Jawa Timur bekerjasama dengan Kompyawisda Jatim, 2008.
- [8] M. J. Kartomi, "Performance, Music and Meaning of Réyog Ponorogo," *Indonesia*, no. 22, pp. 84-130, Oct. 1976, [Online]. Available: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3350979>
- [9] M. Z. Fauzanafi, *Reog Ponorogo: Menari di antara Dominasi dan Keragaman*. Yogyakarta: Kepel Press, 2005.
- [10] L. S. Kencanasari, "Warok dalam Sejarah Kesenian Reog Ponorogo (Perspektif Eksistensialisme)," *Filsafat*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 179-198, 2009.
- [11] H. Lisbiyanto, *Reog Ponorogo*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2013.
- [12] A. Sugianto, "Kebudayaan Masyarakat Jawa Etnik Panaragan," *Aristo*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 45-52, 2016.
- [13] S. A. Nurdianto, "Ponorogo: Menggali Jati Diri untuk Membangun Harmoni," *Jantra*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 1-9, Jun. 2018, Accessed: Dec. 13, 2023. [Online]. Available: <http://jantra.kemdikbud.go.id/index.php/jantra/article/view/59>
- [14] A. Dwijayanto and D. M. Rohmatulloh, "Ponorogo, The Little Java: Potret Kebudayaan dan Keberagaman Masyarakat Muslim Ponorogo Abad XX," *Al-Adabiya: Jurnal Kebudayaan Dan Keagamaan*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 1-31, 2018, doi: <https://doi.org/10.37680/adabiya.v13i01.2>.
- [15] Y. A. Hilman, E. W. Dwijayanti, and Khoirurrosyidin, "Identitas Lokal Masyarakat Etnik Panaragan," *Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik*, pp. 98-133, 2020.

- [16] D. Miller, *Stuff*. Polity Press, 2010.
- [17] S. Woodward, *Why Women Wear What They Wear*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2007.
- [18] C. Tilley, W. Keane, S. Kechler, M. Rowlands, and P. Spyer, *Handbook of Material Culture*. SAGE Publications Ltd, 2006.
- [19] T. J. Csordas, "Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology," *Ethos*, vol. 18, pp. 5-47, 1990, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1525/eth.1990.18.1.02a00010>.
- [20] I. Hodder, *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and Things*. John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., Publication, 2012.
- [21] C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Basic Books, 1973.
- [22] C. Reinhart, *Antara Lawu dan Wilis: arkeologi, sejarah, dan legenda Madiun Raya berdasarkan catatan Lucien Adam (residen Madiun, 1934-38)*. Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia bekerja sama dengan Yayasan Arsari Djojohadikusumo dan Pemkab Magetan, 2021.
- [23] N. P. Stoianoff and E. Wright, "Fair Use and Traditional Cultural Expressions," in *Fair Use and Traditional Cultural Expressions' in Corbett, S & Lai, JC (eds), Making Copyright Work for the Asian Pasific: Juxtaposing Harmonisation with Flexibility*, ANU Press, 2018, pp. 75-94. Accessed: Apr. 22, 2026. [Online]. Available: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3282623>
- [24] A. Pizam and S. Sussmann, "Does Nationality Affect Tourist Behavior?," 1995.
- [25] J. P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979.
- [26] M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 4th ed. London: Routledge, 2019.
- [27] R. T. Asholiha and J. A. Khusyairi, "Tradisi selamat di makam Kampung Kedung Mangu Surabaya," *Siwayang Journal*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 107-120, 2022.
- [28] H. Knoblauch, "Focused Ethnography," *Forum Qual. Soc. Res.*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2005.
- [29] J. P. Spradley, *Participant Observation*. New York : Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980.
- [30] A. Taufiq, "Perilaku Ritual Warok Ponorogo Dalam Perspektif Teori Tindakan Max Weber," *Jurnal Sosiologi Islam*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 112-122, 2013.
- [31] Purwowijoyo, *Babad Ponorogo VII*. Ponorogo: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Ponorogo, 1990.
- [32] Soemarto, *Melihat Ponorogo Lebih Dekat*. Apix Offset, 2011.
- [33] Purwowijoyo, *Babad Ponorogo Jilid I: Bathoro Katong*. Ponorogo: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Kabupaten Ponorogo, 1984.
- [34] Pemerintah Kabupaten Ponorogo, *Pedoman Dasar Kesenian Reyog Ponorogo dalam Pentas Budaya Bangsa*. Ponorogo, 1996.

- [35] Dinas Kebudayaan Pariwisata Pemuda dan Olahraga Kabupaten Ponorogo, "Reog Ponorogo: Sejarah dan Perjalanannya Menuju ICH UNESCO," disbudparpora.ponorogo.go.id. Accessed: Aug. 10, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://disbudparpora.ponorogo.go.id/reog-ponorogo-sejarah-dan-perjalanannya-menuju-ich-unesco/>
- [36] J. A. Khusyairi, "Javanese Reformed Christians in Yogyakarta and the making of professionals, 1897-1959," Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, 2020.
- [37] G. K. Hapsari, "Makna Komunikasi Ritual Masyarakat Jawa (Studi Kasus pada Tradisi Perayaan Malam Satu Suro di Keraton Yogyakarta, Keraton Surakarta, dan Pura Mangkunegaran Solo)," *COMPEDIART*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 44-52, 2024.
- [38] J. Harsono and S. Santoso, *Sosiologi Masyarakat Ponorogo*. Ponorogo: UMPO Press, 2013.
- [39] R. D. Nasution, Haryanto, and A. G. Karim, "Warok's Success to Keep Power with the Tradition of Javanic Political Thinking," *Italienisch*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 160-165, 2022, Accessed: Dec. 13, 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://italienisch.nl/index.php/VerlagSauerlander/article/view/182>
- [40] Khoirurrosyidin, "Dinamika Peran Warok dalam Politik di Ponorogo," *Humanity*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 25-37, 2014, Accessed: Dec. 13, 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/humanity/article/view/2389>
- [41] N. U. Krismawati, Wardo, and N. Suryani, "Eksistensi Warok dan Gemblak di Tengah Masyarakat Muslim Ponorogo Tahun 1960-1980," *Religio: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 116-138, 2018, doi: <https://doi.org/10.15642/religio.v8i1.747>.
- [42] M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. University of California Press, 1978.
- [43] T. G. Svensson, "Clothing in the Arctic: A Means of Protection, a Statement of Identity," *Arctic*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 62-73, 1992, [Online]. Available: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40511193>
- [44] W. Moerany, P. Sardjiono, S. I. Gayatri, and Adyaryani, *Pakaian Adat Tradisional Daerah Jawa Timur*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Kebudayaan Daerah, 1987.
- [45] warisanbudaya.kemdikbud.go.id, "Reog Ponorogo," Warisan Budaya Takbenda Indonesia. Accessed: Sep. 16, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://warisanbudaya.kemdikbud.go.id/?newdetail&detailTetap=28>
- [46] Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia, *Pemajuan Kebudayaan*. 2017.
- [47] spkt.kemdikbud.go.id, "Reog Ponorogo," SPKT. Accessed: Sep. 16, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://spkt.kemdikbud.go.id/telusuri/01808ced-7f3a-4dfc-ad54-2d1a616808d4>
- [48] Ponorogo Regent Regulation, *Pakaian Dinas Aparatur Sipil Negara di Lingkungan Pemerintah Kabupaten Ponorogo*. 2021.
- [49] C. R. and T. of the R. of I. Minister of Education, *Pakaian Seragam Sekolah Bagi Peserta Didik Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar dan Pendidikan Menengah*. 2022.

LIST OF RESOURCE PERSONS/INFORMANTS

Christanto, Andi (50 years), *pemilik toko souvenir dan kerajinan reyog* “Parikesit” Ponorogo, interview on 9 June 2024 at his store, Kepatihan, Ponorogo, Jawa Timur.

Kartikasari, Yuni (28 years), *guru SMP N 2 Kauman Ponorogo*, interview on 4-5 March 2024 at her home, Siman, Ponorogo, Jawa Timur.

Riyadi, Slamet (65 years old), *Pensiunan PNS Dinas Kebudayaan, Pariwisata, Pemuda, dan Olahraga Kabupaten Ponorogo sekaligus Dewan Pengawas Yayasan Reyog Ponorogo*, interview on 15 June 2024 at his home, Desa Paringan, Kecamatan Jenangan, Ponorogo, Jawa Timur.

Sunarso (55 years), *Pangarsa PAKASA Gebang Tinatar Ponorogo*, interview on 9 June 2024 at his home, Surodikraman, Ponorogo, Jawa Timur.

Widodo, Agung (29 years), *seniman Jaran Thik/Reyog Thik Kridho Nogo Loreng Ponorogo*, interview on 12 March 2024 at his home, Desa Caluk, Kecamatan Slahung, Ponorogo, Jawa Timur.