

Analysis of Javanese Mysticism in the Film Qorin Directed by Ginanti Rona

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Article history	ABSTRACT
Upload : July 20, 2024 Revised : July 30, 2024 Accepted : July 30, 2024 Publish : July 31, 2024	Horror films have been one of the most popular and influential genres in the film industry since the early 20th century. One of the exciting films studied is Qorin, directed by Ginanti Rona. This film raises a mystical theme about local people's beliefs about supernatural beings. This research uses a theoretical and methodological approach. They were theoretically using Javanese theory studies. The methodological approach uses descriptive qualitative. Primary data related to this research includes images and sentence quotes from the film Qorin. The data source was from the film Qorin on the Bioskop Indonesia Entertainment YouTube channel. The data collection technique for this research is through listening and recording techniques in the film Qorin, directed by Ginanti Rona. Based on the conclusions of this research, it is recommended that 1) Art studies explore more deeply how Javanese mystical values are understood in contemporary films; 2) Literature Learning, providing valuable learning experiences for students in understanding Javanese concepts such as self-introspection and ritual symbolism, this film helps students understand and appreciate cultural values.
Keywords: film, horror movies, Javanese values	

INTRODUCTION

Films are based on the imagination and creativity of directors in various genres such as action, comedy, horror, romance, animation, and documentary. One of the genres that is currently trending is horror. According to Heeren ([Debby et al., 2020](#)), horror films present stories or events that are identical to myths or things that are closely related to supernatural beings, so they are liked by Indonesian audiences. Nuryanto ([2017](#)) explains that drama as a literary genre presents scenes of characters verbally according to the dialogue script. Drama is divided into several types depending on the presentation of the play, such as tragedy, comedy, opera, and others ([Sumaryanto, 2019](#)). Etymologically, the term film comes from cinematography which means 'movement' ([Alfathoni & Manesah, 2020](#)). Research shows that the representation of mysticism in films can preserve traditional values while criticizing social change ([Imanjaya, 2009](#)). Strong visual aesthetics are needed to depict the mystical world of Java ([Wijaya, 2019](#)), while narrative and story structure create the concept of time and reality in the Javanese perspective ([Keeler, 1987](#)). Films also function as a revitalization of tradition and open up space for intercultural dialogue in Indonesia's multicultural society ([Heryanto, 2015](#); [Bowen, 2003](#)). Indonesian horror films have shown an interesting trend in the last decade, especially in the representation of mysticism. Imanjaya and Lücking ([2020](#)) stated that mystical elements in horror films often become metaphors for social problems. Alkhajar ([2021](#)) raised the theme of "New Indonesian Horror" which combines traditional elements with modern narratives, such as in the films "Hamba Setan" (2017)

and "Perempuan Tanah Jahanam" (2019). Heeren (2012) stated that horror films often tell stories about myths and supernatural creatures, which are very popular with Indonesian audiences. Some famous horror films are "KKN in Penari Village", "Sewu Dino", "Devotion of Satan", and "Makmum". One exciting film to study is "Qorin", directed by Ginanti Rona Tembang Asih. Ginanti Rona is known to be productive in making horror films such as "Painting Ratu Kidul" and "Midnight Show".

The film "Qorin" combines elements of Javanese mysticism and Islamist attitudes. This film raises the concept of Javanese mysticism, which teaches about theology, mythology, cosmology, and anthropology in Javanese culture. Javanese includes various beliefs such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, animism, dynamism, and shamanism. According to Mulder (2005), Kejawen is a way of life that includes philosophical, mystical, and ritual aspects. The film "Qorin" explores these concepts through mystical elements such as the existence of spirits and spiritual practices.

Analysis of elements of Javanese mysticism in the film "Qorin" includes:

1. Concept of Qorin: In Islamic tradition, Qorin is a human spiritual companion. In Kejawen, this concept is acculturated with local beliefs (Woodward, 2011).
2. Rituals and Mystical Practices: These rituals reflect the Javanese tradition, as Geertz (1960) identified in "The Religion of Java".
3. Javanese Symbolism and Mythology: Javanese symbols and mythology carry traditional messages and values (Dharma, 2018).
4. Human Relationship with the Unseen: This interaction is integral to Kejawen's beliefs (Beatty, 2003).

The film's contextualization of Javanese mysticism represents mysticism as a cultural artifact and illustrates its relevance in modern society. Ricklefs (2012) reveals that elements of pre-Islamic beliefs continue to survive and adapt. The syncretism and adaptation of Javanese mysticism with Islam are also reflected in various aspects of life (Woodward, 1989). Hefner (2011) describes the dynamics between tradition, religion, and modernity, while Pemberton (1994) explains identity negotiations in the nation-state era.

The film "Qorin" also opens space for intercultural dialogue and conveys social criticism. Siegel (1986) shows how traditional cultural elements can be used to convey social criticism. Here is the explanation.

Javanese Mystical Psychology explores psychological aspects with mysticism in the Javanese tradition. Endraswara (2016) divides Kejawen's mystical psychology into introspection, search for identity, cosmic awareness, and magical sasmita.

Kejawen mystical symbolism focuses on the interpretation of symbols and the symbolic meaning of offering rituals (Endraswara, 2016). Kejawen, is a teaching related to religion and philosophy of life, emphasizing inner mastery and emerging from various indigenous beliefs of Javanese society (Imron et al., 2023). Koentjaraningrat (1984) explains that Javanese society sees the universe as full of supernatural powers that influence human life, a concept reflected in Ginanti Rona's film "Qorin", which combines Javanese mysticism with contemporary narratives (Sasono, 2012). Symbols in rituals

help explain values in society. Kejawen's mystical teachings include spiritual values and practices for balance and harmony. Endraswara (2016) explains aspects of the mystical teachings of *wejangan* (teacher-student) and the essence of Javanese *wejangan*.

The film "Qorin" is a medium for exploring and representing Javanese mysticism in a modern cultural and social context, providing an overview of how this tradition survives and adapts to the times.

METHOD

1. Qualitative Research Approach

This research uses a qualitative approach focusing on textual and contextual analysis of the film "Qorin". This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the meaning, symbolism, and socio-cultural context in the representation of Kejawen mysticism (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

2. Data collection

The data collection method for this research involved three main approaches. First, the film "Qorin" was analyzed by repeatedly watching it to understand the narrative, structure, and visual elements. This process includes making dialogue transcripts and scene descriptions relevant to the theme of Javanese mysticism and identifying and categorizing mystical elements in the film, including visual symbols, dialogue, music, and sound effects. Second, a literature study was carried out by collecting and analyzing academic literature related to Javanese mysticism, Indonesian cinema, and film theory, as well as examining media articles and film reviews to understand the public and critical reception of "Qorin". Third, if possible, a semi-structured interview will be conducted with director Ginanti Rona to understand his creative vision and personal interpretation of Kejawen mysticism. In addition, interviews with producers, scriptwriters, or artistic directors are also planned to gain additional perspectives on the creative process and decision-making in the representation of mystical elements. It is hoped that the combination of these three methods can provide a comprehensive understanding of the representation of Kejawen mysticism in the film "Qorin".

Primary data related to this research includes images and sentence quotes from the film Qorin, which is available on Bioskop Indonesia Entertainment's YouTube channel. This research data collection technique uses listening and note-taking techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mystical value of Javanese is an effort to convey, bridge, and become a way to get closer to God. This symbolizes the distance between human closeness and God, which is the link to mystical concentration. Javanese mystical values focus on the spiritual aspects of Javanese Sufism, the symbolism of Javanese Sufism, and the noble teachings of Javanese Sufism.

a. Description of Javanese Mystical Psychology in the Film Qorin, Directed by Ginanti Rona

Javanese mystical psychology explores how Javanese beliefs and practices influence an individual's mental, emotional, and spiritual states. Aspects of Javanese mystical psychology include introspection and the search for identity in the film Qorin.

1. Mawas Diri

Javanese people practice an attitude of life with the term *hasta sila*, a daily life guideline that helps people become self-aware. In this study, data was found related to (1) *nandhing sarira*, (2) *ngukur sarira*, and (3) *tepa salira*.

a) Nandhing Sarira

Nandhing sarira is when a person compares himself with others and finds himself superior. The following explains the analysis of *nandhing sarira* in the film Qorin.



Figure 1. Ujay answers Yolanda's question

Ustaz Jaelani : If you are still questioning this, you are not ready to study here or receive knowledge from your *murshid*.

(Qorin, 2022: round 11)

Figure 1 is a scene depicting Yolanda with her courage in asking critical questions. However, Ustaz Jaelani firmly answered that Yolanda was not ready to study according to the rules at the Islamic boarding school. Ustaz Jaelani also compared Yolanda's abilities with his own, describing an introspective attitude when assessing Yolanda's suitability.

b) Ngukur Sarira

Ngukur sarira is when someone measures other people using themselves as a benchmark. The following explains the analysis related to measuring sarira in the film Qorin.



Figure 2. Icha is annoyed with Yolanda

Icha : I still have people out there who still care about me. Not like you!

(QORIN, 2022: round 24)

Figure 2 depicts Icha's disappointment toward Yolanda because she feels her friend is interfering in her affairs. He believes people still care about him, unlike Yolanda, who seems to have no one at the Islamic boarding school because she is stubborn and has difficulty socializing.

c) Tapa Salira

Tapa Salira is where someone measures other people by themselves as a benchmark. The following explains the analysis related to tapa salira in the film *Qorin*.



Figure 3. Umami Hana asks about students

Umami Hana : What about the children, Aa? Zahra looked confused yesterday.
What is wrong, Aa?

(QORIN, 2022: round 13)

Figure 3 depicts Umami Hana seeing her student Zahra looking confused when they met her. This scene is a form of Umami Hana's introspection in understanding her students' feelings.

2. Finding True Feeling

Javanese mysticism has a divine principle which is often called "*rasa*". According to Hadiwiyono ([Endraswara, 2016](#)), the understanding surrounding human life is divided into four, namely (1) *rasa pangrasa*, (2) *rasa rumangsa*, (3) *rasa sejati*, and (4) *sejatining rasa*.

a) Rasa Pangrasa

Pangrasa is a feeling that humans experience through their senses. The following is an explanation of the taste analysis in the film *Qorin*.



Figure 4. Yafi's harsh treatment

Icha : Yafi, let go. Yafi, it hurts Yafi. Leave!

Yafi : Why did you just say that?

(QORIN, 2022: round 24)

Figure 4 depicts Yafi's treatment of his girlfriend, Icha, who hurt her feelings, making Icha feel even more pain. This reflects that *rasa pangrasa* expresses the pain that Icha feels. This expression is a form of human inner experience in living life.

b) Rasa Rumangsa

The feeling of home is a feeling of *awareness*, *creativity*, and *grahita* towards Allah SWT. The following is an explanation regarding the analysis of the meaning of *rumangsa* in the film Qorin.



Ummi Yana

:

Figure 5. Ummi Yana in dhikr
Laaillahailallah.. Laaillahailallah..
(There is no god but Allah SWT)

(QORIN, 2022: round 33)

Figure 5 depicts Ummi Yana doing dhikr as part of her efforts to save the students from the temptation of the genie who possessed the students. The real meaning that Ummi Yana has in this context is the meaning of *rumangsa*, which is reflected in the pronunciation of Tauhid, "*Laa ilaha illa Allah.*"

Description of Javanese mystical symbolism in the film Qorin, directed by Ginanti Rona

Symbolism in Javanese mysticism is decoration and an opinion about deep beliefs and philosophy. Endraswara (2016) divides Javanese mystical symbolism into three aspects: the interpretation of symbols, the symbolism of spiritual texts and dance, and the symbolic meaning of ritual offerings. Javanese mystical symbolism focuses on interpreting symbols and symbolic meanings of offering rituals, with the following explanation.

1. Towards an Interpretation of Symbols

Understanding Javanese mysticism requires in-depth study. Endraswara (2016) states that the theory of symbol interpretation can be done in three ways: 1) meaning obtained from local informants about observed ritual behavior, and 2) meaning obtained is not limited to the person's words alone. Informants, but from the actions carried out in the ritual, 3) meaning is obtained through interpreting symbols concerning other symbols.



Figure 6. Spelling of spells

Ustaz Jaelani : Aum dinamaut eka Djati atma amawa dina buana ngahiji pikeun raga tunggal .
(in death, birth, spirit, spirit unites two worlds in one body)
(QORIN, 2022: round 46)

Figure 6 is a scene depicting the awakening of Jin Qorin. The meaning of the mantra reads, "In death, birth, the spirit, the spirit unites the two worlds in one body". As a reinforcement for the ritual, Ustaz Jaelani prepared several treats as offerings for Jin Qorin. He recited the mantra with sharp eyes, then moved his hands to form three points while holding the oil bottle. This process causes Jin Qorin to approach the students and possess them. The recitation of this mantra lends a strong sense of tension to each ritual scene.

2. Symbolic Meaning of Ritual Offerings

Offerings are symbolic discourses used for spiritual negotiation with the supernatural. This is done so that the spirits above do not disturb humans. According to Endraswara (2016), ritual symbols can be offerings or sacrifices. Offerings actualize the perpetrator's thoughts, desires, and feelings to get closer to God.

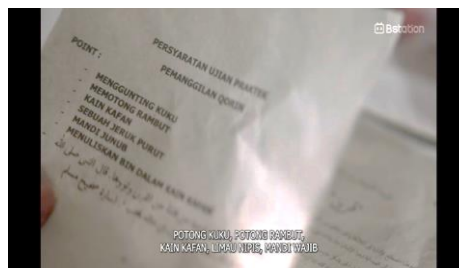


Figure 7. Ujay gives the sheet

Zahra : Requirements for the Qorin summoning practice test.
1. cut nails
2. cut nails
3. shroud
4. kaffir lime
5. take a junub bath
6. a place to write inside the shroud.
(QORIN, 2022: round 11)

Figure 7 is a scene depicting the practice exam for Qorin summoners as a graduation requirement. The third class must prepare several essential things. They need to cut their nails, cut their hair, and collect kaffir limes, which are then combined in one shroud. The

shroud is then folded to resemble a *pocong*, with the word "bin" written behind the name of the summoning target. Before the ritual begins, the students must take a *junub* bath. In its implementation, Ujay will lead the ritual by reciting a mantra or prayer while using an oil bottle and making hand movements to form three points. This ritual aims to summon Qorin with a specific purpose, which is an essential part of the evaluation to achieve a passing grade.

Description of the film Qorin the Noble Teachings of Kejawen Mysticism, Directed by Ginanti Rona

Kejawen's mystical teachings are a collection of Javanese traditions' spiritual values, practices, and beliefs. They aim to achieve balance and harmony and search for higher spiritual awareness. In this regard, Endraswara (2016) mentions aspects of Javanese teachings, including mystical discourse (teacher-student), the essence of Javanese mystical discourse, and *suwung*, *pulung*, *revelation*, and *ndaru*.

1. Mystical Discourse

Teachers are considered more potent, so students can imitate their teachers' behavior. According to Endraswara (2016), a student can choose a mystical teacher who firmly adheres to Sapta Guna Karya, namely (1) *nastiti*, (2) *nastapa*, (3) *kulina*, (4) *diwasa*, (5) *santosa*, (6) *engetan*, (7) *santika*, and (8) *lana*. Mystical discourses in the movie Qorin are *nastiti*, *kulina*, and *diwasa*.

a) Nastiti

Nastiti is a teacher who is not confused when giving advice. The following explains the analysis of *nastiti* in the film Qorin.



Figure 8. Ustaz Jaelani is conducting religious studies

Ustaz Jaelani : *Qala qarínuhu rabbana ma'athghaytuhu walakin kanafi dhalalin ba'idz* .
The Jinn who accompanied him said, Our Lord, I did not lead him astray, but he was in significant error. The human companion is a demon assigned to accompany humans, namely Jin Qorin.

(QORIN, 2022: round 7)

Figure 8 depicts Ustaz Jaelani's activities in conducting religious studies on Jin Qorin, a form of mystical advice called *nastiti*. *Nastiti* means giving knowledge without confusion and based on hadith teachings. Ustaz Jaelani teaches his students about the knowledge he has obtained clearly and based on valid religious sources.

b) Kulina

Kulina is a teacher who makes a habit of behaving well with her students. The following is an explanation of the culinary analysis in the film Qorin.



Figure 9. Ummi Yana tells about Islamic boarding school rules and regulations

Ummi Yana : All students here keep their rooms clean and the environment clean. They comply with the rules that apply here. Understand?
(QORIN, 2022: round 6)

Figure 9 depicts Ummi Yana telling Yolanda about the rules that must be obeyed. The behavior conveyed by Ummi Yana is a *culinary action*, which means carrying out good habits. Following the dialogue above, Ummi Yana taught the students to implement good behavior under applicable rules.

c) Diwasa

Diwasa is a teacher who is genuinely mature and mature in his knowledge so that it can be applied to his students. The following is an explanation of the *diwasa* analysis in the film Qorin.



Figure 10. Routine activities of santri

Ummi Yana : Alhamdulillah. Good, Tiara, yes. Next. Is anyone else ready?
(QORIN, 2022: round 2)

Figure 10 shows Ummi Yana as a teacher who has extensive knowledge. He always leads the students' activities when memorizing hadiths. Ummi Yana also carries out her behavior *diwasa*, which means she is a truly mature teacher in teaching knowledge.

2. The Essence of Kejawen Mystical Advice

The mystical Javanese teachings include several things, such as the desire for humans to be a source of progress. Therefore, humans are required to seek provisions for life in the afterlife. According to Endraswara (2016), mystical advice can be carried out

by implementing five systems, including 1) *tata tertib*, 2) *tata titi*, 3) *tata krama*, 4) *tata susila*, and 5) *tata negara*. The Kejawen mystical advice obtained in the movie is only found in *tata tertib* and *tata susila*.

a) *Tata Tertib*

Tata tertib is everything arranged in an orderly and neat manner and must be done by a student. The following explains the rules and regulations in the film *Qorin*.



Figure 11. Ummi Yana, with her firmness

- Ummi Yana : Third phone? Masha Allah, are you still doing this? This is very detrimental! What will you do with this phone?
- Ummi Yana : Sincere, right? Do you know if you are wrong? Do you know? Good.
- Ummi Yana : You still dare to repeat it.

(QORIN, 2022: act 3)

Figure 11 shows Ummi Yana imposing sanctions for violations of Islamic boarding school rules. This is a firm attitude of a teacher in educating his students so that female students become more disciplined. This is a form of mystical advice in the form of discipline.

b) *Tata Susila*

Manners are students who use good manners in life. The following is an explanation of manners in the film *Qorin*.



Figure 12. Greetings

- Zahra : Regards! (*stand*)
- female students : "Peace be upon you, and Allah's mercy and blessings."

(QORIN, 2022: round 11)

Figure 12 shows Zahra's attitude as a class leader when the teacher arrives and is about to start learning. He stood up and gave the order to welcome the teacher. Zahra practices five rules, one of which is etiquette (using politeness and empan papa or positioning oneself in life). As the class president, Zahra shows etiquette through a respectful and polite attitude towards the teacher. The act of standing up when the teacher comes and telling his friends to say hello is a reflection of the ethical and moral values he adheres to. By leading by example, Zahra carries out her role well and helps instill moral values in her friends, creating a learning environment of mutual respect.

CONCLUSION

The film "Qorin" explores the rich and complex mystical values of Javanese, showing the profound spiritual and traditional aspects of Javanese culture. Kejawen emphasizes balance and harmony between humans, nature, and the spiritual world, demonstrated through character interactions with supernatural beings or experiencing supernatural events. This film also highlights Kejawen traditions and rituals, such as certain ceremonies, to maintain balance and honor ancestors. The concepts of karma and destiny taught in Javanese also reflect the journey of the characters in this film who feel the consequences of their actions. The discovery of identity and inner peace, an essential focus in Javanese teachings, is explored through the character's journey to finding the meaning of life and inner peace. Javanese symbolism and mythology, with various influential folk tales and legends, are also used to build a mystical atmosphere and develop an in-depth narrative. Overall, "Qorin" can be considered an effective medium for introducing and depicting *Javanese* mystical values, providing the audience insight into Javanese spiritual and cultural richness.

Future research on Javanese mysticism in Indonesian cinema has various exciting directions to explore. Some concrete recommendations include a longitudinal study of the evolution of representations of Javanese mysticism from the New Order era to the digital era, analysis of audience reception of mystical elements in films, exploration of the intersection of mysticism with contemporary issues such as gender and politics; research into cinematographic techniques in the visualization of mystical concepts; study of representations of mysticism in the context of transnational film production; analysis of ethics and responsibility in representing mystical practices; study of the potential of mystical films as Indonesian soft power; research into the impact of digital technology on the representation of mysticism; examining the role of film as an archive of Javanese mystical culture; as well as studies on the use of films in education and literacy in Javanese mysticism. These approaches can use various methods such as content analysis, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, visual experiments, and case studies, which are expected to enrich understanding of the role of Javanese mysticism in Indonesian cinema and culture more broadly.

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