

Regional Branding: Transfers Medium Dance into Visual Identity in Ponorogo Image Construction

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Abstract

This article discusses how the people of Ponorogo, East Java, Indonesia, designed a visual identity as a representation of *Reyog* dance to build up a regional image through a series of branding communication activities. This study uses a qualitative paradigm with a case study approach. The data was collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document investigation. All data collected were analyzed using an interactive model. The results showed that the five characters of the *Reyog* dancer were represented as a visual identity for Ponorogo branding through the process of media transferring using photography, illustration, and sculpture techniques. *Reyog's* visual identity with motion characteristics is implemented in each channel of branding communication media through primary, secondary, and tertiary communication approaches. Other local governments can use these research results as a model to build up a regional image through dance media.

Keywords: Regional Branding, Visual Identity, *Reyog*, Ponorogo, Indonesia.

1. Introduction

Based on Law Number 22 the Year 1999 (revised into Law Number 32 the Year 2004) concerning Regional Autonomy, every region in Indonesia is given the authority to regulate itself, be active, and creatively earn regional revenue. Various programs are made to make a region unique and attractive to tourists and investors, one of the regional branding concepts.

Until 2019 there were 74 regencies/cities out of 514 regencies/cities in Indonesia implemented the branding concept to improve the regional economy. The use of regional brands is based on local characteristics and identities by utilizing regional assets in cultural arts, natural environment, agricultural products, processing, culinary, services, industry, education, architecture, and facilities.

Ponorogo Regency, East Java, Indonesia, is one of the regions that apply branding by utilizing its cultural arts assets. According to data from the Ponorogo Regency Bappeda (2016, p. 44-45), there are 31 types of traditional arts that have developed in the Ponorogo community, among which the most popular are: *Reyog*, *Karawitan*, *Hadroh*, *Gajah-Gajahan*, *Orkes Melayu*, *Qosidah*, *Campursari*, *Jaranan*, *Ketoprak*, and *Odrot*. From a total of 950 art groups, the *Reyog* art group is the largest. The number of *Reyog* art groups reaches 259 groups and spread across almost all Ponorogo region villages.

As the most famous art in Ponorogo, *Reyog* dance is preserved and used to build up a regional image through branding activities. Regional branding activities are not limited to created slogans or logos. However, they are the soul that animate all regional activities, be it the soul of its citizens, the bureaucracy character, the availability of supporting infrastructure, and the arrangement of regional visual elements as a complement (Karim and Pontoh, 2012, p. 2).

Reyog's visual elements presented in the Ponorogo branding communication media look flexible and humanist so that it plays a role in attracting public attention. Hospers (2009, p. 232) stated that the effective use of pictorial representations distributed through the media could be a powerful tool for marketing an area. Turok (2009, p. 17) states that the principles underlying the selection of images to describe an area in marketing materials contribute to developing attractive marketing messages, especially in terms of creating attractiveness and distinctiveness.

Creating a representative visual identity design cannot be separated from the awareness of the importance of visuals to convey information (Tabrani 2009, p. 8). Everyone in understanding visuals will follow the context discussed, as suggested by Rose (2001) and Ida (2014, p. 128). According to Knapp (2002, p. 19) and (Sihombing 2010, p. 1), branding communication messages with image elements presented graphically are more effective in optimizing the awakening of audience perceptions.

Perception is related to image formation and how messages are received, including various associations, memories, hopes, and other feelings that drive people's behaviour (Anholt, 2007, p. 5). Image refers to the audience perspective in translating signals sent through a communication process consisting of message senders, messages, media channels, and message recipients (Kepferer, 2008, p. 174).

Several studies have been published on image construction through the use of traditional arts with similar problems. Research conducted by Yurisma et al. (2018, p. 13) shows that the image of Ponorogo as the City of *Reyog* is based on physical and non-physical elements. The physical elements are in the form of a region dividing gate, traffic lane, and the town square—non-physical elements in the form of slogans, visual symbols, and activities. The presence of physical artefacts represented by *Reyog* attracts the attention of the public. Research by Handoko et al. (2020, p. 918) shows that the Ponorogo image is formed by holding regular monthly and annual events. Monthly show events include the *Reyog Telaga Ngebel*, *Reyog Purnama*, and the *Gebyar Reyog* rural celebrations. National show events include the Student *Reyog* Festival and the National *Reyog* Festival. The activities carried out have made Ponorogo a nationally recognized cultural city.

This research focuses on how the people of Ponorogo design the visual identity of the *Reyog* dance and how its implementation in Ponorogo branding communication activities. These research results are significant because other local governments can use them as inspiration to build up a regional image by using the dance art assets.

The discussion in this study uses a media transfer theory and an image communication theory approach. The transfer of means is through moving one type of medium to another to

express, achieve, or exhibit ideas or feelings, as stated by Damono (2016, p. 13). Image communication theory is used as presented by Kavaratzis (2004, p.64); image communication is done through three types of communication: primary, secondary, and tertiary communications. Primary communication emphasizes the potential influence and actions taken by a region, including landscape strategy, infrastructure projects, organizational and administrative structures, and behaviour. Secondary communication is related to intentional and planned venue marketing activities using promotional and advertising components. Tertiary communication refers to the worth of mouth communication enhanced by the media and competitor communication activities.

2. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative paradigm that is analytic descriptive by revealing events or facts, variables, and circumstances that occur in *Reyog* as a visual identity used by the Ponorogo community to build up a regional image through a series of appeal activities. Qualitative research is an independent, multidisciplinary field of inquiry linked to cultural studies and has an interpretive character through extensive and profound data deepening (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, p. 2).

Researchers collected data through in-depth interviews with many individuals related to Ponorogo branding activities. For data deepening, participatory observation and document tracking techniques are used. The research data was tested for accuracy and correctness using triangulation by comparing different data sources to explore the same data. If there was a synchronizing, then the data is considered valid. The data collected were then grouped into invariant cases and coded for analysis using an interaction model. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.10-11) state that interaction analysis consists of three main streams: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

3. Result

For the people of Ponorogo, *Reyog* is not just a performing art; *Reyog* is an identity that will be maintained at all costs because Ponorogo is synonymous with *Reyog*, an art that has become inseparable part of the life of its people. *Reyog* dance is used as a regional asset. Its existence is used to build up the Ponorogo image through a series of planned, integrated, and sustainable branding communication activities.

The people of Ponorogo use *Reyog* dance as a visual identity through a process of transferring media art with the approach of photography, illustration, and sculpture techniques. *Reyog's* visual identity with movement characteristics is made by considering the dancer's posture, expression, artistic, and compositional aspects.

Reyog's visual identity resulting from transferring means is implemented in various Ponorogo branding communication media through a series of image communication activities consisting of primary, secondary, and tertiary communications. These activities have contributed to Ponorogo fame and the increase of the tourists visiting Ponorogo each year, which has led to the improvement of the community's economy and regional income.

4. Discussion

Ponorogo's *Reyog* Dance Art

Reyog is often performed at various celebratory events and organized by governmental institutions, the private sector, community groups, and individuals as a folk entertainment art. For example, the Republic of Indonesia's independence day, the celebration of national holidays, political party campaigns, regular regency government programs, village cleansing rituals, weddings, circumcisions, etc.

Reyog performances require an open area with a high ceiling because the *Barongan* mask's height can reach up to 4 meters. *Reyog* performance usually takes place during the day, between 2 pm and 6 pm. There are not many *Reyog* performances at night, as it will require a more lighting system. The *Reyog* performance duration is at least 30 minutes, which occurs in the national *Reyog* festival, and the longest is up to 4 hours, mainly if the performances include a procession (Simatupang 2019, p. 148-149).

There are various forms in *Reyog* art developed in the community, from *Reyog Obyok*; *Reyog Panggung* (stage); *Reyog Santri*; *Reyog Pelajar* (student); and now appears *Reyog Perempuan* (woman). Although they have many variations with their respective characteristics, they have similarities in the performance component, including the performance types of equipment, the *gamelan* instruments, the various dances, clothing, and make-up use. The *Reyog* performances include *Barongan*; *Mask Kelana Sewandana*; *Samandhiman's* whip, *Bujangganong* mask; and *Eblek* (horse-shaped plait). In *Reyog* performances, *Barongan* or *Dadak Merak* acts as the central figure and completes the show. Its presence is mandatory because it serves to initiate and close the performance. See figure 1.



Figure 1: *Barongan Reyog Ponorogo's*. Source: author, 2019

Barongan consists of two sets, namely *Dadak Merak* and *Caplokan*. *Dadak Merak* is the upper part of *Barongan*, which is made of peacock feathers with about 1500-2000 feathers arranged in such a way on a *Dadak Merak* frame made of bamboo rattan a raft with a height of around 3-5 meters. *Caplokan* is *Reyog's* head in the form of a mask framework with a shape resembling a tiger's head, made of *randu* tree wood wrapped in real tiger leather. *Barongan* weighs more than 50-kilo grams, played by biting the wooden handle located inside the *Barongan* mask (Government of Ponorogo Level II District, 1994, p. 105).

The gamelan instruments that accompany the *Reyog* stage consist of trumpets, drums, *ketipung*, *kempul*, *kethuk* and *kenong*, and *angklung*—the trumpet functions as a melody and signal before the gamelan played. *Kendang* functions as a signal at the beginning of the *gending*, accompanying dance movements, controlling the rhythm, and adjusting the tempo of the *gending*. *Ketipung* serves as a lively musical addition. *Kempul* functions as bass. *Kethuk* and *Kenong*, functioning as rhythmic, are struck alternately with a rhythm in tune with their tempo. *Angklung* functions as a rhythm and accompaniment between *kethuk* and *kenong* (Government of Ponorogo Regency 2013, pp. 15-18).

The various dances in the *Reyog* art performance consist of: *Warok* Dance, the dance movements seem heavy and broken, playing a role in creating an atmosphere full of dignity, charisma, and solemnity; *Jathil* dance is often referred to as the *Jaranan* dance, depicting the dexterity of horse riders who are training in war; *Pujangganong* dance, the dance movements are agile, attractive, funny and always create a sensation that symbolizes the life that is not always straight and smooth; *Klana Sewandana* dance depicts fair and wise leadership with scientific integrity that has reached the pinnacle of perfection and personality integrity which oriented towards welfare and justice; and the *Dadak Merak* Dance, as a dance that must always be on the *Reyog* stage because its presence is the same as the existence of *Reyog* art itself (Kurnianto 2017, p. 37-56).

The clothes worn by the *Reyog* dancers' character have a full variation of characteristic accessories, as stated by Soemarto (2014, p. 41-55). *Kelana Sewandana* figures use clothing in the form of mask, mirror and stretches, *cinde* pants, *uncal*, *epek timang*, *boro-boro*, *jarit parang*, *sampur*, *cakep*, *keris*, shoulder *kelat*, *probo*, *samandiman* whip, *binggel*, and *stagen*. *Bujangganong* characters wear clothing in *bujangganong* mask, black trousers, *binggel*, *embong gombyok*, *epek timang*, *stagen*, *cakep*, *sampur*, and red vest. *Jathil* figures wear clothing in the form of *eblek*, *gulon ter*, *srempang*, *iket*, white long-sleeved shirts, blackened pants, *kace*, *boro-boro*, *samir*, *jarit parang*, *sampur*, and *epek timang*. *Barongan* figures use clothing in *barong* mask, *stagen*, *embong gombyok*, black trousers, *timang epek*, *cakep*, and a vest shirt. *Warok* figure clothing is in *gembrong* baggy black pants, *jarit* cloth with a black background, *stagen*, drawstring, *timang epek*, *wakthung* shirt, pocket watch, *blangkon/udeng*, and *keris gabelan*.

Make-up is only used by dancers who do not wear masks, namely *Jathil* and *Warok* dancers. *Jathil* dancers use subtle male make-up (approaching valour), and *Warok* dancers use dashing and spooky make-up (Government of Ponorogo Regency 2013, p. 24).

Reyog's art performance plot consists of opening dances, the core dance, and the closing dance. The opening dance starts with the *Warok* dance played by male dancers, followed by female dancer's *Jathil* dance. After the opening dance finished, it continued with the core dance, which contains the scene according to the *Reyog* dance program. In general, the scenes shown are about love stories or warrior stories. It ends with a closing dance featuring the *Dadak Merak*, *Klana Sewandana*, and *Bujangganong* dances, with scenes of *Klana Sewandana* defeats *Singa Barong* (*Dadak Merak*).

In every appearance, *Reyog* provides entertainment that is fresh and exciting. The dance movements are agile and full of heroism, beautiful clothing full of authority, and dynamic instrument accompaniment that can create admiration and joy. *Reyog's* fame has made Ponorogo an area that is reckoned with in the map of traditional arts in Indonesia, so it is not surprising that many people are interested in this art. *Reyog* is widely used for various purposes, ranging from academic activities, preaching media, entertainment performances, tourism-based performances,

local and national festivals, publications, political party campaigns, to commercial activities (Kurnianto 2017, p. 1).

The Transformation of the *Reyog* Dance Form into a Visual Identity

Reyog has a beautiful visual appearance and is to be proud of. *Reyog's* visual appeal can be seen in the form, appearance, and variety of dance movements. In *Reyog* dance, there are five characterizations, each of which uses clothing with different shapes and appearances. Likewise, with the movements, each character has movement characteristics that look expressive and have character.

Special consideration is needed to produce a representative *Reyog* visual identity design to meet Ponorogo's visual branding communication needs. According to Wondo (Personal communication. 2019, September 10), the presentation of *Reyog's* visual identity for Ponorogo branding must look impressive and have character. According to Sodik (Personal communication. 2019, September 12), *Reyog's* impressive visual identity is related to the willingness to embody an expression in dance seriously with a strong soul.

To create a strong impression of *Reyog's* visual identity, it is necessary to understand the lines and symbols of motion reflected in *Reyog's* dancers' posture. According to Devi (1972, p. 30), there are four ideal postures of the body for sculpture and other arts and crafts, i.e., *Samabhanga*, *Abhanga*, *Atibhanga*, and *Tribhanga*. *Samabhanga* is a movement with the same balance arc. The *Abhanga* is a slight bowing motion with one hip gracefully raised, body weight supported on one leg. *Atibhanga* is a large bend with the torso tilted diagonally and the knees bent (plie). The *Tribhanga* is a triple bend with one hip raised, the torso arched to the opposite side, and the head tilted at an angle. Understanding the *Reyog* dancer's body posture plays a role in creating a *Reyog* dancer's character's visual identity with their movement characteristics.

Besides that, according to Cahyo (Personal communication. 2019, September 12), *Reyog's* impressive visual identity can be seen from the expression of the *Reyog* dancer's character created because of the emotional attachment between one display and another in a *Reyog* performance arena. Agree with that, Sugeng (Personal communication. 2019, September 12) added that *Reyog's* impressive visual identity is also created by fulfilling artistic and composition elements.

According to Najih (Personal communication. 2019, April 27), to create a *Reyog* visual identity that is strong and characterized by motion, artistic skills in graphic design and photography are needed. Graphic design technical skills are needed because images tell a story, have strong appeal, and increase the likelihood of a noticeable message. Expertise in photography is needed to relate to how the shooting angle and the ability to capture the scene's momentum in a *Reyog* show with excellent lighting quality, focus, and ideal composition.

Furthermore, according to Sugeng (Personal communication. 2019, September 12), the short scene momentum becomes a lack of getting all *Reyog* characters' artistic quality in one shot photo. A solution can use the collage technique by combining several photos of *Reyog's* artistic characters into one complete visual composition. Wandu (Personal communication. 2019, September 10) stated that for the needs of Ponorogo branding communication, five *Reyog* characters could be read separately, in pairs, and ultimately, according to their needs.

Understanding each character's characteristics in *Reyog* is necessary to select the show's most characteristic fragment parts. Najih (Personal communication. 2019, April 27) provided an overview regarding the criteria used to determine the *Reyog* character is to become the visual










identity of the Ponorogo branding. The character of the *Dadak Merak* (tiger head) mask used must be handsome, dignified, fierce, and reads "*Seni Reyog Ponorogo*." The *Warok* dancer's character must show dramatic dance moves, have an aggressive appearance, and use the right clothing attributes. The *Jathil* dancer's character wears white clothes with a combination of black, yellow, and red. The *Bujang Ganong* dancer's character must show agile and attractive dance moves with hair movements. The *Klono Sewandono* dancer's character must show authoritative dance movements, the direction of the face, the costumes used, and the dancer's proportional posture.

In line with that, Wondo (Personal communication. 2019, September 10) said that the most characteristic visualization of the *Dadak Merak* was seen in the *obyok* movement (the wagging movement of the *Dadak Merak*), the *Kupu tarung* (the movement in pairs facing each other and wagging the *Dadak Merak*), and the *sampak* (resembling the movements of a tiger). The visualization of *Klono Sewandono* must show dignity (like a king); the visualization of *Bujang Ganong* shows dance moves that look lively; *Jathil* shows a dance move on an *eblek*, looks excited with a small smile; and for *Warok*, the appearance must look fierce.

The transformation of the *Reyog* dance media by the people of Ponorogo into a visual identity for branding can be seen from the physical artefacts that characterize the Ponorogo area. By observing how these physical artefacts appear, it becomes clear how the media transfer technique is used. The description of the transfer media's techniques and results can be seen in the following table 1.

Table 1: The Matrix of the *Reyog* medium being transformed into a visual identity for Ponorogo branding

Reyog's Character	Result Media Transfer		
	Photography Approaching	Illustration Approaching	Sculpture Approaching
<i>Klono Sewandono</i>			
<i>Bujang Ganong</i>			
<i>Jathil</i>			

Reyog's Character	Result Media Transfer		
	Photography Approaching	Illustration Approaching	Sculpture Approaching
			
Warok			
Barong			

Based on data from *Reyog's* physical artefacts made by the people of Ponorogo, it is known that the visual identity that represents the character of *Reyog's* dancers was created through a media transfer using the approach of photography, illustration, and sculpture techniques. The approach through the photography technique is made by taking photos directly when the *Reyog* dance is performed. It takes photography technique skills and captures momentum to produce *Reyog* dancers' images with character. The illustration approach was made through digital and manual processing. The digital processing is carried out using vector-based computer graphics software. The manual illustration is made with a mural approach. The sculpture technique approach is used to produce a *Reyog* dancer's character in the form of a 3-dimensional.

The characteristics of the movement in *Reyog's* visual identity, as the result of the media transfer of the Ponorogo community, can be seen through the appearance of the *Reyog* dancer's characteristic posture. The postures displayed characterizing the postures of the *Samabhanga* and *Atibhanga*. See figure 2.



Figure 2: The posture of *Reyog's* visual identity character as a result of the media transfer. Source: author, 2019

Implementation of *Reyog* Visual Identity through Branding Activities

Ponorogo Regency image is formed from the audience's perception, constructed through three types of communication: primary, secondary, and tertiary communication.



Figure 3: Landmark placement of the *Reyog's* character. Source: author, 2019

Primary (internal) communication activities are carried out by constructing landmarks in the form of gates decorated with *Reyog* statues and reliefs on the border with other regency (Wonogiri, Madiun, and Trenggalek), village entrance gates and a number of main road crossing points, infrastructure development in the form of a covered or open stages to supporting the *Reyog* performances, *Reyog* village development, naming city parks and government asset buildings using the names of characters in *Reyog*, the application of rules for male employees in the Ponorogo government environment to wear *penadon* clothes (*Warok* clothes) during the *Grebeg Suro*

celebration (in the month of *Muharram* in the Islamic calendar) and on the 17th of every month, routine *Reyog* performances at local and national levels, such as *Reyog Purnama* which is routinely held every full moon night, *Reyog Telaga Ngebel*, *Reyog Serempak* celebration on the 11th of each month, *Reyog Mini* festival and National *Reyog* festival which are routinely held every year.

Secondary (external) communication activities are carried out through advertising and promotion by implementing *Reyog's* visual identity in various print-based and electronic visual communication media delivered offline and online. The printed media used include billboards, street banners, brochures, and *umbul-umbul* (Flag). The online media used include video profiles, web marketing, and social media. Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest channels communicate and convey information related to Ponorogo branding activities to a broad and non-paid audience.

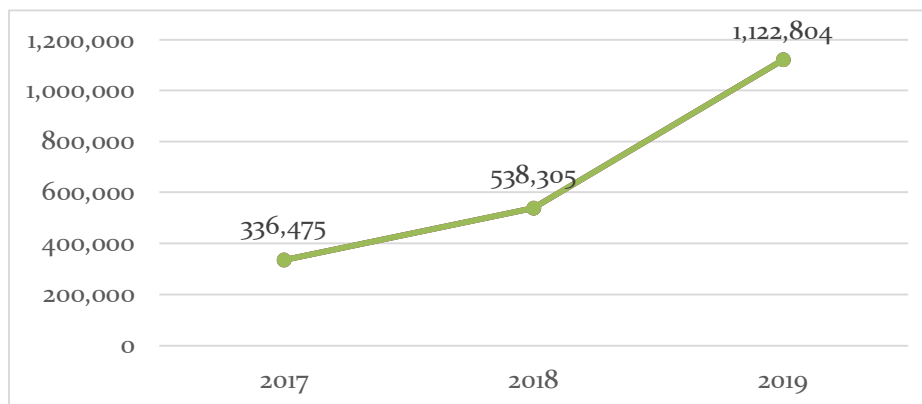
Table 2: The use of social media in Ponorogo branding communication activities

Social Media	Link Address
Youtube	Ponorogo Tourism
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/ponorogotourism
Twitter	https://twitter.com/TourismPonorogo
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/ponorogotourism/
Pinterest	https://id.pinterest.com/ponorogotourism/_saved/

The tertiary communication aspect is advertising communication carried out by the public by word of mouth as a form of satisfaction with what they experienced when visiting Ponorogo. Visitors who are satisfied with Ponorogo will recommend Ponorogo as a unique and exciting place to visit.

Through a series of branding communication activities carried out, Ponorogo is increasingly known. Based on tourist visit data from the Ponorogo Culture and Tourism Office, the number of tourist visits in Ponorogo has increased significantly.

Table 3: Ponorogo tourist visit data. Source: Ponorogo Culture and Tourism Office, 2019



The increase in tourist visits that occurred also contributed to an increase in the regional economy. The value of the Gross Regional Domestic Product (PDRB) of Ponorogo Regency based on constant prices in 2017 of IDR 12.93 trillion, in 2018 increased to IDR 13.62 trillion, and in 2019 it

increased significantly to IDR 20.50 trillion (Central Statistics Agency of Ponorogo Regency, 2020. p. 18).

5. Conclusion

Reyog dance is a cultural identity of the people of Ponorogo; Its existence is used as a regional asset and is used to build the image of Ponorogo through a series of consistent, integrated, and sustainable branding activities.

The *Reyog* dance with attractive and dynamic dance movements is transformed into a static visual identity with motion characteristics. The media transformation of the *Reyog's* visual identity, carried out by the Ponorogo community, uses photography, illustration, and sculpture techniques. *Reyog's* visual identity, characterized by movement, is made by considering aspects of the dancer's body posture, expression, artistic, and representative composition. The body pose of the *Reyog* dancer seen in the visual identity of *Reyog* as a result of the media transfer characterizes the body postures of the *Samabhanga* and *Atibhanga*.

The intense emotional ties between *Reyog's* characters in one arena of the show create expressions that become benchmarks in the designing of *Reyog's* visual identity. Artistic layouts in graphic design, photography, and sculpture are needed to present *Reyog's* representative visual identity. Five *Reyog* dancers' characters can be presented in a single, paired, and complete visual composition tailored to the branding communication that needs to be conveyed. *Reyog's* visual identity resulting from a media transfer that is representative and characterized by movement has been implemented in every Ponorogo branding communication channel, including static media through primary, secondary, and tertiary communication types. The local government's branding communication activities and the Ponorogo branding community have significantly contributed to improving the community's economy and have contributed to the regional incomes.

Funding Disclosure/Acknowledgement

This research would not have been successful without the help of various parties, including the Faculty of Design and Creative Arts, Mercu Buana University, with the research permission granted; Education Fund Management Institution (LPDP), and the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, for the provision of funds.

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