Presenting Local Wisdom: A Multimodal Analysis of Sedekah Gunung Merapi Video as a Tourism Promotion in Boyolali Regency

Julianne Indah Rachmawati, Warto & Titis Srimuda Pitana

Abstract


The traditional ceremony of Sedekah Gunung is one of the local wisdoms possessed by the community of Lencoh Village, Selo, Boyolali Regency. This ceremony aims to express the villagers’ gratitude and requests the protection of God from disasters. This ceremony has potency as it often becomes a tourist attraction. Media coverages are needed to disseminate contents and information about this ceremony. One example of existing media coverages on the tradition is a video uploaded on video-sharing website YouTube named Sedekah Gunung Merapi. This paper analyzes several aspects: (1) What are the means used in the Sedekah Gunung Merapi video to present Sedekah Gunung as a tourist attraction of Boyolali Regency? (2) How does the presentation of Boyolali’s local wisdom in Sedekah Gunung Merapi video promote Boyolali Regency’s tourism? (3) What is the meaning of presenting local wisdom in Sedekah Gunung Merapi video as tourism promotion in Boyolali Regency? The method used in this research is multimodal analysis developed by Kress and van Leeuwen. The studied video contains more than two semiotic systems consisting of linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial. The research finds that discourses on local wisdom are constructed to accentuate the cultural richness possessed by Boyolali’s community. Discourses are packaged and disseminated through the video to commercialize the regency’s tourism.

Kata kunci/Keywords:
Multimodal, wacana, kearifan lokal, turisme, representasi
Multimodal, discourse, local wisdom, tourisme, representation

Introduction

Boyolali is famous for its natural beauty and cultural richness. One of the areas in Boyolali blessed with such characteristics is Lencoh village. This village is located in District Selo, Boyolali. Located on highlands, this region has an agrarian culture, one of which is the traditional ceremony of Sedekah Gunung (Mountain Alms). This ceremony is held every 1 Sura (Javanese calendar) or 1 Muharram (Islamic calendar). This ceremony is celebrated by all villagers even those from other villages surrounding Mount Merapi. Therefore, this ceremony illustrates the region’s cultural richness.
oped as one of Boyolali’s main tourist attractions. Presenting the ceremony attractively, however, is necessary in order to attract potential tourists. This means, the presentation of traditional ceremonies should be commercialized in order to benefit the tourism sector. Commercialization requires the media to disseminate information on the tradition to the audience. Media, as a space of interactions where people do not have to meet physically, is a platform to disseminate meanings to audience. As Hall (1997: 4) argues, across diverse texts and media, meanings are collected and reinforced, particularly in modern mass media which provides a means of communication with complex technologies that spread meaning across different people at various speeds. In the context of this research, the mass media can be employed as a means of communication to spread constructed meaning of Sedekah Gunung ceremony so that it can benefit Boyolali’s tourism. Therefore, the media functions as a tool to represent Sedekah Gunung as an alternative tourism in Boyolali’s packed with local wisdom.

There are several studies that examine alternative tourism, including as Cohen (1987), Butler (1990), Dernoi (1981), and Gursoy, Chi, & Dyer (2010). They studied alternative tourism both theoretically and critically in the field. In essence, alternative tourism is the opposite of mass tourism which over-exploits and damages tourist attractions. Alternative tourism is described as a more eco-friendly tourism. Such characteristic appears in Sedekah Gunung Merapi video uploaded on YouTube by Boyolali District’s official account.

Based on the above, there are several issues that will be discussed in this research. First, what are the means used in the Sedekah Gunung Merapi video to present Sedekah Gunung as a tourism attraction of Boyolali Regency? Second, how does the presentation of Boyolali’s local wisdom in Sedekah Gunung Merapi video promotes Boyolali Regency’s tourism? Third, what is the meaning of presenting local wisdom in Sedekah Gunung Merapi video as tourism promotion of Boyolali Regency?

The objective of this article is to examine the phenomenon of traditional ceremony representation, particularly Sedekah Gunung as Boyolali Regency’s tourism, in mass media and how it affects the sanctity of traditional ceremonies.

**Literature Review**

**Representation**

Hall (1997: 6-7) Representation argue that “representation is conceived as entering into the very constitution of things; and thus culture is the conceptualized primary economic material base in social subjects and historical events not merely a reflection of the world after the event.” Representations can only be seen after something is formed and the meaning is constituted. Representation works through language and discourse. Text, images and videos are media that express and disseminate discourse. Therefore, representation can be used to study textual meanings and study the process of producing meaning in various contexts.

**Representation and Tourism**

Tourism is a trip that is carried out many times or in circles, from one place to another. Modern tourism according to Freuler is a contemporary phenomenon that is based on the need for health and the changing atmosphere, an assessment that is aware and fosters love for the beauty of nature and in particular due to the increasing association of various nations and classes of human society as a result of the development of commerce, industry, trade and refinement transport equipment (Yoeti, 1996:112). The form of mainstream tourism is mass tourism. Meanwhile, opponents of mass tourism are alternative tourism. The last type of tourism is considered as more environmentally and culturally friendly tourism.

Parma (2010) states that mass tourism is at a tipping point, so it is necessary to create an alternative tourism. According to Parma, alternative tourism, one of which is manifested by eco-tourism, aims to increase people’s sensitivity to nature, provide economic benefits to local residents, increase people’s sensitivity to ethnic culture, and minimize the negative impact on the environment. These objectives are portrayed by a YouTube video about the Sedekah Gunung ritual at Mount Merapi. Idajati (2014) states that cultural-based tourism development is intended to achieve a distribution of interzonal economic development. Her research provides an overview of culture-based tourism which is represented by videos on Sedekah Gunung ritual procession in the context of tourism.

Azmi & Ismail (2015) Cultural Heritage Tourism: Kapitan Keling mosque as a focal point & symbolic identity for Indian muslim in Penang who examine Keling Mosque as a tourist attraction argue that cultural heritage is not only a symbol of identity, but also economic, social, and educational sources for Indian communities in Penang, Malaysia. This is what inspires the government, the private sector, and the public to exploit the potential of culture and environment as alternative tourism. In the context of this research, it argues that cultural heritage has an enormous potential in alternative tourism as demonstrated by promotions on YouTube videos.

Hall & Page (2000) argues that tourism marketing tends to use ethnicity as a commodity that can be sold. This means that cultural tourism exploits local wisdom owned by a community for the benefit of the market in an effort to gain profit. In the context of this paper, it argues that tourism presents local wisdom as tourist attraction, as exemplified by a video about the Sedekah Gunung ritual.
Local Wisdom

Sartini (2004) states that local wisdom is local ideas that have wisely and good values that are lived and followed by community members. Local wisdom is related to the term local genius that has the meaning of national cultural identity and personality so that it is able to accept and absorb foreign culture based on its own character and personality. Local genius consists of values, norms, beliefs, customs, and culture that have special meaning and function in the face of changing times. Local wisdom is the link between local culture and outside influences such as modernity and globalization. This is what you want to be highlighted by the YouTube video about Sedekah Gunung at Merapi Mount.

Pora (2014) states that local wisdom is a manifestation of local culture that is able to strengthen life so that it becomes one of the forms of human humanization in culture. He gave an example of oral literature in Ternate which represented local wisdom in the culture of the people there. This is in line with the local wisdom of the Lencoh community represented by the Sedekah Gunung Ritual on YouTube.

Local wisdom is related to local genius (Dewi, 2013). Local genius (local wisdom) has the ability to resist changes and influences of external culture so that it is called the resilience of the nation. She uses Hall’s representation to examine the elements of local wisdom in paintings by Srihardi Soedarsono. This means, an image contains text and meaning that represents a local wisdom. Therefore, this reality is similar to the image of local wisdom portrayed by the Sedekah Gunung Ritual on YouTube.

Research Methodology

This video needs to be studied because this documents the Sedekah Gunung ritual in Selo, Boyolali in a concise, interesting, and informative manner. These attractively packaged and presented by the editor with a very short duration. In addition, these were uploaded by the Boyolali Regency’s official YouTube account. This account also uploads reportage videos, tourism promotions, and documentaries related to Boyolali Regency. Therefore, there is a hidden purpose behind uploading this video. This is the main reason why this paper examine this video. To review this video, this paper uses qualitative data analysis methods.

This research uses qualitative data analysis method coupled with the paradigm of Cultural Studies. Data were collected from purposive interviews and secondary sources obtained from libraries. The main data analyzed was obtained from Boyolali Regency’s official YouTube account.

The main theory used in this research is multimodal, an interdisciplinary approach to science. This terminology is also often disputed in the realm of semiotics and linguistics. According to this theory, meaning arises from a series of communication process, both verbal and nonverbal, on communication media (Sinar, 2012: 133). Meaning production arises from spatial or grammar relations of images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The images are verbal language that realizes three language metaphors (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). Kress & Leeuwen (2006) also state that “images represent the relations between the people, places, and things they depict, and the complex set of relations that can exist between images and their viewers.” This means that images have the function of describing and conveying a particular text and context to viewers.

The next element in multimodal analysis is composition. Composition relates to the representational and interactive meanings of images to each other through three interrelated systems, including:

- Information value, is the placement of elements (participants and syntags that relate them to each other and to the viewer) endows them with the specific informational values attached to the various ‘zones’ of the image: left and right, top and bottom, centre and margin.
- Salience is the elements (participants as well as representational and interactive syntags) are made to attract the viewer’s attention to different degrees, as realized by such factors as placement in the foreground or background, relative size, contrasts in tonal value (or colour), differences in sharpness, etc.
- Framing is the presence or absence of framing devices (realized by elements which create dividing lines, or by actual frame lines) disconnects or connects elements of the image, signifying that they belong or do not belong together in some sense. (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006: 177).

Lencoh Village Society Maintains Nature Harmony

Mount Merapi is the most active volcano in Java. Almost every year, this mountain indicates eruptive activity. Therefore, it reinforces the belief that society must be at peace with nature. One of the ways used by the community to make peace with nature is to perform a sacred traditional ceremony. This ceremony is associated with a religious system called Kejawen or Java-nism. It is a syncretic religious system between the Hindu-Buddhist mystic concept, Islam, and the local beliefs of Javanese society (Koentjaraningrat, 1994). Sedekah Gunung is a religious
practice used by the people of Lencoh Village as an expression of gratitude to God and plea for protection from any future dangers.

Lencoh Village is a village located at the foot of Mount Merapi. According to the story that has been passed down from generation to generation, the name Lencoh village arose from a dispute. In the past, there was a family of two brothers, namely Kyai Irogati and Sangkep. After living with his sister for some time, Kyai Irogati got married. With his wife, Kyai Irogati lived side by side with her brother, Kyai Sangkep, in the east and west of a gorge. As years passed, the three people led their neighbors to make a small road connecting hamlets and assisting the locals to travel. The neighbors however, were jealous of the three figures because of their unprecedented reputations.

One day, Kyai Irogati got a trial from the God Almighty. He later died and left behind his wife, his two daughters, and Kyai Sangkep. Then, a conflict between Kyai Irogati’s family members started to arise. As days passed, the family members’ opinions increasingly clashed, which resulted in Kyai Irogati’s wife uttered the word sedelencoh, which refers to the absence of an agreed upon opinion. Finally, the hamlet was named Lencoh (http://desalencoh.blogspot.co.id, 2014). This is the legend surrounding Lencoh Village, a proof of the local wisdom of the village.

In addition to the abovementioned legend, there are other legends believed by the villagers of Lencoh relating to a story of a trip of Mbah Petruk. According to the legend, Mbah Petruk wanted to plough a field. The land was packed by buffalos, which were then sacrificed. Coupled with a variety of uba rampe consisting of rice cone (tumpeng), klobot cigarettes, palawija, roasted jadah, gomok, acang-acung, bothok sempuru, banana, kanthil flower, eggs, and thousands of rupiah, the heads of the sacrificed buffalos were then covered with white mori cloth and made as an offering (Gumilang, 2014; Solopos.com, October 13, 2015). This legend is believed by the community as the origin of the Sedekah Gunung ritual at Mount Merapi.

However, according to the information conveyed by a caretaker of Lencoh Village, this ceremony has been conducted since the time of Paku Buwana IV. The ceremony must be led by a prominent and respected public figure. Community leaders are believed to possess traditional spiritual power which can ensure that the ceremony will run smoothly. There is also a story which states that the Sedekah Gunung ritual has been carried out since the era of Paku Buwana VI (www.nu.or.id, 8 November 2013; metrojateng.com, 14 October 2015; www.timlo.net, 5 November 2014; desalencoh.blogspot.com, March 18, 2015). Meanwhile, there are also stories which claim that this ritual was born during the Paku Buwana IX period (kompas.com, 8 December 2010).

Such different versions are common in oral tradition. Human memory has its limitations when it comes to remembering past events. It is very susceptible to distortion, especially when stories are told from one generation to another. Written evidence about the ritual is also very limited; hence, different parties often have their own version of the ritual’s origin. Therefore, news sources only mention estimations when covering the ritual. In addition, this tradition has been carried out by the community for a long time, making it difficult to ascertain the time of the beginning of this ritual and the spread of the legends surrounding the ritual.

The legends about Lencoh village are closely related to legends in other agrarian cultures, especially the one near Mount Merapi. Natural disasters and occurrences often affect people’s perspective. Therefore, legends were created to provide answers to various mysteries.

The climax of the Sedekah Gunung ceremony is the pendehm endhas kebo (burying buffalo’s head) ritual into the slopes of Mount Merapi. The purpose of this ritual is to obtain the salvation and protection of the God Almighty from any dangers and disasters. This ritual is routinely held every 1 Sura or 1 Muharram. People believe that this traditional ceremony can keep them away from disaster (Paiman, 2017, Interview on April 12). Such belief is a symbol constructed in the Javanese religious system. Fashri (2014) argues that symbols have the power to shape, protect, and change reality. The power of symbols is believed to acquire the willingness of people to believe, acknowledge, and accept beliefs formed by symbols. Based on this, it can be concluded that the ceremony of Sedekah Gunung Merapi is a sign system consisting of symbols that contain meaning.

Results
Presenting Local Wisdom as an Alternative Tourism on YouTube

According to Law No.10/2009 on Tourism, tourism is defined as a variety of tourism activities and supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, businesspeople, and the government (both national and regional). There are various types of tourism, but it is generally divided into two, namely mass tourism and alternative tourism. The first is more commonly known because this concept of tourism is more mainstream. The second, on the other hand, first emerge as a result of criticism to the first.

Alternative tourism is an alternative to the less favored type of tourism, which is mass tourism (Butler, 1990). The concept of alternative tourism is rooted in two contemplative ideological results. The first is a counter-culture against modern mass consumerism, while the second is the impact of the modern industrial world on the third world society (Cohen, 1987). Alternative tourism can be defined as a journey that is motivated by...
a search for authenticity and an engagement between different peoples’ background, ethnic, and cultural relationships as components that support each other (Dearden & Harron, 1994).

The concept of alternative tourism can be found in Boyolali Regency’s tourism sector that maximizes the potential of local environment and culture. In this case, it is the Sedekah Gunung traditional ceremony. In order to increase potential tourists’ awareness about the Sedekah Gunung traditional ceremony as a local wisdom owned by the community, a platform is needed.

Media is an intermediary between conveyors and receivers of information, messages, and knowledge. In the context of cyberspace, the internet acts as such intermediary. High-tech media such as the internet is often referred to as the new media, that is a sophisticated version of a new computerized information and communications delivery technology system and digitization in a network (Sullivan, 2016: 605-606; Kellner, 1995: 16). In the context of this research, the media becomes a means to convey and spread information on Sedekah Gunung ritual to audience on video-sharing website YouTube.

The representation of Sedekah Gunung ceremony in the media serves as a means of promotion of Boyolali’s alternative tourism to boost the number of tourists. A YouTube account named Kabupaten Boyolali uploaded a video entitled Sedekah Gunung Merapi, which is about the ceremonial procession of Sedekah Gunung. The reporter is Joko Marjoko, while the videographer and editor is Denny Sugiharto. In the upper right corner of the video, there is a symbol of Boyolali Regency, implying visually that the content on the video relates to the Boyolali Regency administration. The video briefly describes the procession of ceremonial traditions as an attempt to preserve (nguri uri) Javanese culture, which is explained by the Head of Lencoh Village, Sumardi, in an interview recorded in the video. The video also shows the ranks of Boyolali administration that supports the implementation of this tradition. The video presents Boyolali’s traditional ceremonies in an interesting way.

The video has a very short duration of one minute and thirty-four seconds. It is divided into sections. The first section depicts the tradition of wayang kulit (shadow puppets) performed by a little puppeteer, a masterpiece owned by the Java community. Wayang kulit is a tradition of storytelling narrated through Javanese dolls made of leather. It tells the story of the Indian epics, namely Mahabharata, Ramayana, Lokapala, and Arjunasasrabahu, that have undergone the process Javanization, (Prisandy, Indrawati, & Ratnawati, 2016). Since the arrival of Hindu-Buddha and Islam in the the country, puppet stories have evolved. In fact, at that time, Sunan Kalijaga, one of the “nine saints” of Javanese Islam, created and used puppets as a medium of dakwah (proselitization). This was very popular in Java because it contained great values and Javanese philosophy of life. For Javanese people, this is not only an entertainment but also a guide to life.

According to Nurgiyantoro (2011), the values contained in wayang take part in character education. Wayang aims to mirror human life, including the various problems in it, such as personal, moral, social, and spiritual problems. Puppets have the function to carry out, maintain, and develop life. All of them have the ultimate goal to achieve the perfection of life, purity, and put the people in harmony with the rulers of the universe (Manunggaling Kawula Gusti). Therefore, puppets are an important part of the great rituals of Javanese society.

Almost every major ritual of the Javanese society includes shadow puppets, both in cities and villages. A study of Siburian & Malau (2018), for instance, examines the Sura ritual at Sambirejo Village, which performs an all-night leather puppet activity attended by enthusiastic local people. People regard puppet shows as a symbol of God’s will as puppet shows will not be able to prevail without audience (Nurgiyantor, 2011). God is believed to have the power to determine the location of the puppet shows that can attract the most enthusiasm of the audience and the community.

According to Sukirno & Sutarmanto (2007), shadow puppets have the power to unite and strengthen social solidarity in a society. It contains the value of mutual cooperation, the harmony of life, peace, caring for others, and peace. The attraction of the shadow puppet show have enticed international communities and researchers to study it, making traditional Javanese leather puppets as one of the internationally recognized cultural treasures and recognized by the UNESCO on November 7, 2003, as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (Nurgiyantor, 2011). This demonstrates that there is a purpose behind puppet shows, as illustrated in the early stages of Sedekah Gunung Merapi video.

The first section of the video is the most important part as it determines whether the viewers will continue watching the video or not. In the case of Sedekah Gunung Merapi video, its first part section, which shows wayang kulit (shadow puppets), signs that the video wants to represent various kinds of local wisdom owned by the society near Mount Merapi in Boyolali area. The objective is to attract viewers since the start of the video.
Meanwhile, a scene in the video showing of little puppeteer has another meaning. Puppeteer is a symbol of the ruler of life that governs the destiny of the puppets. In other words, the puppeteer symbolizes; hence, the little puppeteer is a symbol of the future leaders who will determine the lives of the people. This scene also represents ongoing regeneration and inheritance of traditional values. The video depicts how the puppeteer and the musicians take their jobs very seriously in conducting a puppet show.

In the video, an inscription saying marching the head of a buffalo in the procession of Sedekah Gunung Merapi is shown. Linguistically, this statement represents shadow puppet as an important part in every Javanese traditional ceremony, including in the Mount Merapi. In the video’s audio, the gamelan sound background that accompanies the puppet show is a symbol of the wealth of Javanese society’s music tradition.

According to Jocuns (2003), gamelan is traditional music from Indonesia which is performed in Java, Madura, and Bali. It is usually played by Javanese musicians in traditional ceremonies and religious rituals. Walton (2007) states that the function of gamelan is to accompany dance, theater, ceremonial events such as sacred rituals, marriages, and commercial settings. Gamelan is not only a form of entertainment music, but also a sacred music tradition. The relationship between gamelan and Javanese mysticism is close. The sound of gamelan is believed to have a spiritual power so that it can evoke mysticism in a cere-}

mony or ritual. Walton describes the relationship between gamelan and mysticism as follows:

“I have shown how gamelan music and mysticism in Java share many elements of discourse and experience. The Sanskrit scholar says that a work of art can cause transcendent states; some Javanese musicians feel that gamelan music can be spiritually uplifting. The Sanskrit scholar says that only the sensitive aesthete can appreciate a work of art; some Javanese musicians claim that only the spiritually pure can truly understand gamelan music. For Javanese meditators, “ultimate reality” is not over; in gamelan music, the inner melody is never stated, only suggested. Members of Sumarah believe that solving a problem involves discovering the truth, which is implicit in the situation; gamelan musicians state that all melodic formulas, even ones newly created for the situation, are inherently a part of the music. The Sumarah leader does not control the members of his or her group, but instead guides them; similarly, the gamelan has no conductor in the Western sense. The Javanese mystic emphasizes calmness, balance, and communal experience; so does the Javanese musician.” (Walton, 2007).

Based on her explanations, gamelan has the ability to guide the soul to silence in a meditation. The sound of gamelan can lead a person or group to achieve calmness and balance as a communal experience so that they can experience a transcendent experience, or Manunggaling Kawula Gusti. According to Pemberton (1987), in ceremonies of religious rituals or formal domestic rituals, gamelan games are usually refined. Gamelan can create a peaceful atmosphere. However, subtle gamelan music does not always dominate gamelan performance. During shadow puppet performance, for instance, gamelan should be able to evoke the nuances of conversations between puppets; thus, with the help of the gamelan, the puppets can speak for themselves without any dialogues uttered by the puppeteer (Pemberton, 1987). Pengrawit plays gamelan dynamically, which makes it difficult to get the nuances desired by the mastermind.

In this case, shadow puppet shows require gamelan to complement and strengthen the atmosphere in the show’s every scene. In addition, as previously mentioned the relationship between shadow puppet and gamelan is close, as represented by the concept of Pathet. Prasetya states that gamelan pieces/ musical repertoire, especially the pathet concept, greatly influences wayang performance (Prasetya, 2012). According to him, Pathet, in puppetry, has a meaning of boundary, which means that it functions to limit performances. Thus, the relationship between the world of puppets and gamelan cannot be separated. This harmony is the proof of Javanese local wisdom. Therefore, gamelan strengthens the discourse of local wisdom in the form of traditional
Javanese art. This is so because *gamelan* is one of the indigenous cultural heritages of Indonesia, specifically Java, which are internationally recognized by UNESCO.

In the next section, the video displays the information provided by the Head of Lencoh Village, Sumardi. Visual displayed in this section is the figure of Sumardi and the people who are involved in the procession of traditional ceremonies. In this scene, Sumardi explains about what is meant by the ceremony of *Sedekah Gunung Merapi* and the purpose of the ceremony. He says:

“*Sedekah Gunung* adalah adat atau ritual yang dilakukan oleh warga Desa Lencoh khususnya, umumnya di wilayah Kecamatan Selo. Dan, punya tujuan maksud dari warga masyarakat sendiri baik di bawah gunung-adalah untuk nguri-uri budaya yang ada di wilayah kami, apalagi kita hidup di bawah gunung-ada perlu untuk meminta berkah-keselamatan dari Tuhan Yang Maha Esa. Ritual yang dilakukan yaitu, pertama, mengirab seekor kerbau yang nantinya akan disembelih. Dan, setelah disembelih, nanti akan dilarung, disajikan ke Gunung Merapi.”

[Sedekah Gunung] is a custom or ritual performed by Lencoh Village residents in particular, generally in Selo District. And, its purpose or intentions is to nguri-uri (preserve) culture that exists in our region, especially as we live under the mountain. We want to ask for God’s blessings. The ritual that is carried out is, first, marching a buffalo, that will later be slaughtered. And after being slaughtered, it will then be made as an offering, served to Mount Merapi.

Excerpts from an interview with Sumardi shows that this traditional ceremony is a local wisdom preserved (*uri-uri*) by the Lencoh community in particular and Selo subdistrict in general. The inscription “the parade of buffalo head (*kirab endhas kebo*) in a procession of *Sedekah Gunung Merapi*” appears in the video to make the viewers understand the visuals and audio more clearly.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that this scene aims to disseminate the meaning of traditional ceremonies through the speech delivered by the Village Head. The scene is designed to meet the audience’s curiosity about the local wisdom of the village community. Based on his gesture, the Head of Lencoh Village appears serious while providing information, implying that the atmosphere of the procession was formal and sacred. The audio background of the scene is *gamelan* that accompanies the procession of traditional ceremonies in the background, showing that the scene was recorded in a natural setting. In the second half, the scene depicting the procession of traditional ceremonies, coupled with interview passages, strengthens the video’s message. The procession of the ceremony is explained by Sumardi so that the audience will understand the sacredness of the procession.

In the middle of the interview, the video features a scene of dancers leading the ritual procession. At the first glance, the dance performance indicates a sense of tradition. However, the dance is a *kitsch* because it is not a folk dance or palace dance. The dance does include traditional dance movements, but it has undergone some alterations and modifications. The appearance of the dancers in the video certainly aims to attract more audience, as in the past, the ritual procession rarely highlighted the dance performance.

The scene above evokes nuances of tradition and sacredness in order to strengthen the narrative conveyed by the Head of Lencoh Village Head.

The third section of the video includes a passage of speech delivered by Vice Regent of Boyolali, M. Said Hidayat. In this scene, the vice regent’s speech starts the procession of *kirab* (procession) *endhas kebo* (buffalo’s head). In his speech, the vice regent says:

“Mugi-mugi, sedanten menika sageda mlampah kanthi lancar lan ndadosaken keberkahan dhu-mateng masyarakat Kecamatan Selo, Kabupaten Boyolali sedantenipun. Lan sageda pembangan ing Kabupaten Boyolali saged mlampah kanthi lancar.”

[Hopefully, everything can run smoothly and become a blessing for the people of Selo District, Boyolali Regency. And hopefully the development in Boyolali Regency can run smoothly]
This scene indicates that the government is involved in developing the local wisdom owned by the local community. There is one particular sentence that states the government’s hope for a smooth development in Boyolali Regency. This means that the ritual procession is used by the vice regent to convey the policies of the district government so that they can get the support of the people at the procession. In other words, the regional government disseminates the discourse of regional development in part of a sacred procession to obtain power hegemony in the community.

In this scene, the sentence “marching the buffalo’s head (kirab endhas kebo) in a procession of Sedekah Gunung Merapi” appears again. Hence, this paper reinforces the message and its intended meaning of the scenes compiled in the third section of the video. The gestures displayed by both the vice regent and people involved in the procession represent the sanctity of the procession. However, visually, the composed scenes indicate that the traditional ceremony has been previously pre-arranged. It is shown from the costumes, the dancers, and other additional features that are presented attractively.

The last scene in the video shows villagers scrambling over the offerings presented by the traditional ceremony. This scene represents the belief of Javanese society, that every offering has been blessed by people’s prayers. Throughout the video, the scenes are arranged neatly in a particular order so that each scene supports the prevailing discourse about the local wisdom and convey the discourse’s message to the viewers. Thus, the viewers can easily understand the constructed knowledge embedded in the video.

This is in line with the arguments of Krees and Leeuwen (2006) who state that:

“However important and real this disjunction between the context of production and the context of reception, the two do have elements in common: the image itself, and a knowledge of the communicative resources that allow its articulation and understanding, a knowledge of the way social interactions and social relations can be encoded in images” (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006).

In addition, the information about Sedekah Gunung traditional ceremony that is represented in Sedekah Gunung video contains the objective of the video, which is presenting local wisdom as a tourism promotion. Thus, the scene is full of information. The design of the scene is the salience to attract the viewers. Every part is framing to signify that they belong or do not belong together in some sense (Krees & Leeuwen, 2006: 177). Therefore, this video is linear with the Krees and Leeuwen’s concept to present the local wisdom in the context of tourism.

Sacred traditional ceremony “wrapped” in an alternative tourism package. In other words, the representation of Sedekah Gunung traditional ceremony has been shifted in the media. The sanctity of the traditional ceremony has been transformed into a commodity in the tourism industry, particularly as an alternative tourism that is claimed to be eco-friendly and respectful toward local customs, traditions, culture, and society. Something profane, however, starts to emerge, that is a commodification of Sedekah Gunung tradition.

Mosco (in Ibrahim & Akhmad, 2009) argues that commodification is a process of transforming goods and services, including communication systems, into commodities. The government has been presenting traditional ceremonies as tourist attractions since the 2000s. The government combines eco-tourism and cultural tourism as new tourist attractions. The rise of visitors proves that culture, nature, and adventure are
among favorites in the current era. This reality parallels the opinion of Ruzic & Demonja (2015) which states that “adventure spirit is more evident in modern tourists as well as greater demand for holidays that are full of outdoor activities, cultural and recreational contents. It was noted that most of the tourists avoiding destinations with the impaired environment.”

Thus, the representation of the Sedekah Gunung traditional ceremony in the media conveys constructed knowledge about this traditional ceremony as spectacle and entertainment. There is a shift in the value of traditional ceremonies; they are no longer acknowledged as sacred, but rather as a potential commodity, illustrated by the use of traditional ceremonies as tourist attractions. That is, the values of the sacredness of traditional ceremonies are “sold” for the benefit of tourism. As Giddens (2010: 9) says, goals relate to potential actions and motives that contain all the plans or programs, the work that underlies the habit.

The Meaning and Representation of Sacred Ceremonies on YouTube

According to Schweizer, Klemm & Schweizer (1993), ritual is a conception of a general obedience from existence that is inherent in the standard form of behavior. This definition refers to the religious domain in the dimensions of ritual organization and the meaning system or performance. As symbolic creatures (homo symbolicum), ritual is a representation of human social relations to show their existence. Koentjaraningrat (1985: 85) defines ritual as a sacred act or a process of a ceremony carried out by a religious community that is marked by a component of time, place, tools, and performers of the ceremony. That means, a ritual is a sacred act carried out by humans in a belief system coupled with various components as a symbol of religiosity.

Rituals can be interpreted as humans’ relations with each other or with nature. Social relations between humans and the relations between humans and nature cannot be erased. Humans always depend on nature. In the context of culture, there is a belief system that can only be realized through ritual. Therefore, ritual also builds a close connection between humans and nature. In the present era, ritual attracts many spectators, including foreign tourists; thus, making a sacred ritual into a cultural tourist attraction. Ritual that is laced with myths or legends indeed attracts people’s curiosity and attention.

The legends surrounding Lencoh Village are forms of gratitude from the village community for the gift of nature given by God. Legends in Lencoh Village are part of the local belief system. Legends and rituals are sometimes related to each other, as illustrated by the legend of Mbah Petruk which is related to Sedekah Gunung ritual. This ritual is carried out by the village community in order to express their gratitude for the blessings given by God and to respect their ancestors. Carried out every 1 Sura according to the Javanese calendar, the ritual consists of sacred processions which culminate in offering a buffalo’s head to the crater of Mount Merapi. This ritual is in line with the opinion of Koentjaraningrat (1985: 55-57), which states that a ritual is a procedure or ceremony performed by a group of people based on a particular belief system which consists of several components, including the time, place of ceremony, ceremonial tools, and perpetrators ceremony.

Due to the prevailing legends, many tourists visit Boyolali to witness the ritual procession. Coupled with the spread of information on the ritual on YouTube, the video attracts curiosity of more people about the ritual. Therefore, the government displays Lencoh Village’s Sedekah Gunung ritual as a cultural tour, which is an alternative form of tourism to improve the economy and cultural richness of the local community in the current era of globalization.

Globalization has contributed to the process of cultural transformation, including “selling” otherness in tourism. Something that is considered traditional, primitive, or undeveloped is a commodity to be consumed until it becomes a kind of paradox in cultural tourism (Cole, 2008: 20-22). By transforming Sedekah Gunung as a commodity, the values of the ritual has changed from something traditional into a commodity to be exploited. Sacred values are sold to tourists, who consider the ritual as something unique, strange, and different from their own culture.

This phenomenon becomes a problem when the ritual is eroded from its sacred values. The ritual, that was originally expected to provide guidance for the locals, is commercialized and transformed into a public spectacle. The locals then become vulnerable as profit becomes more prioritized rather than their cultural values. Such commodification process is illustrated by Sedekah Gunung ritual as it is turned into an alternative tourism.

One characteristic of the post-modern era is that almost all aspects of life are perceived as commodities. Commodification can be interpreted as changes; thus, commodification can be understood as a process of transforming goods and services, including communication system, into commodities (Ibrahim & Akhmad, 2009). Barker (2005: 517) defines commodification as a process of changing objects, qualities, and signs as commodities in the era of capitalism, which aims to sell the commodities into the market. Thus, commodification changes values into an exchange rate. Piliang (2005: 191) states that commodification extends to the fields of education, culture, desire, religion, body, death, and even politics.

In regard to products, commodities are not limited to goods, land, or labor, but it also include nature, education, culture, and religious symbols. The transformation of these aspects into commodities was prompted by the diverse needs of the market and rapid changes in the current era. This is related to cultural tourism as a characteristic of a nation or region which perceives...
commodity products as a means to fulfill the market needs, especially in the field of tourism.

As it is known that cultural products that are used as commodities are also diverse, of course presenting them as a commodity product is also diverse. Cultural heritage that characterizes a nation or region must be preserved, but it is often used as a commodity for tourism activities in the form of alternative tourism. This means, cultural heritage does attract potential tourists. To make it more efficient, smart innovations which are able to manage the flow of changes and the role of intellectual capital are needed. The intellectual capital intended is not always determined by the level of formal education, but also the accumulation of brilliant ideas and innovations.

Based on the previous explanations, in the case of Lencoh Village, what is turned into a commodity is the local cultural values. The potentials of the cultural values are processed and presented continuously by Boyolali District administration and the village community. Joint projects to build tourist objects are carried out to add more tourist attractions. In terms of accessibility, transportation access has been improved by the government. Betonization and providing more road access are conducted to increase the accessibility to tourist sites. In terms of amenities, the construction of homestays to support tourist occupancy is increased. Other supporting facilities such as weudangan (traditional restaurant), cafes, stalls, and restaurants have been built for the convenience of the tourists. In regard to tourism activities, the community is involved in conducting tourist activities and managing tourist attractions so that relationships are as they should be in alternative tourism.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the commodification of traditional rituals as a tourist attraction becomes paradoxical as the spread of videos about the ritual are widespread in the cyberspace. It is because the video makers can potentially reap financial benefit by spreading information about traditional rituals, in this case Sedekah Gunung, if the information manages to attract more visitors; the videos circulated in the cyberspace becomes a tool to achieve profits. Stuart Hall argues that “in actual social existence, messages have a complex structure of dominance” as at each stage, the messages are ’imprinted’ by institutional power-relations. Furthermore, a message can be received at a particular stage only if it is recognizable or appropriate. This means that power-relations at the process of production, for example, will loosely fit those at the process of consumption. In this way, “the communication circuit is also a circuit which reproduces a pattern of domination” (Hall, 1997: 3).

Not only that, the Sedekah Gunung Merapi video has also managed to become a tool to convey a message that impresses and intrigues potential tourists to witness or participate in the Sedekah Gunung ritual and commemorate the ritual with their smart gadgets. In this case, Stuart Hall argues that “At the stage of production, the message is appropriated as per the technical needs and at the stage of Circulation it is appropriated as per the socio-economic and language power relations. The message is given a presentable shape; a ‘message form’. The message form becomes the vehicle of the intended message. Before it is put to use/consumption, the message is appropriated as a meaningful discourse so that it is meaningfully decoded. At the stage of ‘Use’, the audience can decode the message as per their socio-economic and political background. The audience might have different socio-economic and political background. As the background differs the decoding also differs. It is this set of decoded meanings which ‘have an effect’, influence, entertain, instruct or persuade, with very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioral consequences” (Hall, 1997: 6).

Therefore, it can be seen that on one hand, ritual, as a part of a person’s religious life becomes sustainable, yet on the other hand, the commodification of rituals decreases the sanctity of religious values due to the inclusion of the elements of capital. This reality happens in the case of Sedekah Gunung ritual at Lencoh, Selo District, Boyolali Regency.

Conclusion
The traditional ceremony of Sedekah Gunung is a local wisdom of people living in Lencoh Village, Selo, Boyolali Regency. This local wisdom is an attractive cultural attraction in the context of alternative tourism. Therefore, the media is needed to promote it more among the public. The ceremony is presented in a video entitled “Sedekah Gunung Merapi” which is uploaded on YouTube. The video presents the local wisdom with scenes presenting shadow puppets performance and gamelan. The video also presents information on the tradition provided by the head of Lencoh Village.

The video is concluded with scenes presenting the endhas kebo (buffalo’s head) procession and the locals scrambling over blessings that are believed granted by the procession’s offerings. Each part of the video contains a semiotic element consisting of linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial element. The function of this video is to disseminate constructed information about the local wisdom for commercial purposes, namely tourism promotion. Each part of the video is presented attractively, with all parts intertwined to each other so that the general message of the video can be easily understood by the viewers. However, such presentation of local wisdom also implies that the values of traditional ceremonies are shifting as they are transformed from local wisdom into tourist attractions.