

UNVEILING THE AESTHETIC CHARMS OF 'KHABAR MATI': A DEEP DIVE INTO TEXT FOLK PERFORMANCE ON THE SOUTHERN COASTAL SHORES

Mengungkap Pesona Estetika 'Khabar Mati': Mendalami Teks Pertunjukan Rakyat di Pesisir Selatan

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Abstract

This study undertakes an examination of the aesthetic components found within 'Khabar Mati,' text a well-known traditional folk theater performance within the Southern Coastal region. Utilizing qualitative analysis through a descriptive approach, the research aims to unravel the intricate artistic and cultural dimensions of this conventional theatrical expression. Thoroughly investigating both the narrative and performance facets of 'Khabar Mati,' the study presents a detailed analysis of the text as well as its portrayal on the stage. The primary goal of this extensive inquiry is to offer valuable insights into the rich artistic elements inherent in 'Khabar Mati.' The outcomes of this research are poised to illuminate the profound artistic legacy of the communities in the Southern Coastal regions, granting a deeper comprehension of the cultural and aesthetic significance of this captivating tradition in folk theater. By closely examining both the textual and performative elements, this research provides a comprehensive exploration of 'Khabar Mati,' thereby contributing to a more profound appreciation of its artistic and cultural virtues.

Keywords: artistic, folk, theater, performance

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji komponen estetika yang ditemukan dalam teks 'Khabar Mati', sebuah pertunjukan teater rakyat tradisional yang terkenal di wilayah Pesisir Selatan. Dengan menggunakan analisis kualitatif melalui pendekatan deskriptif, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap dimensi seni dan budaya yang rumit dari ekspresi teater konvensional ini. Dengan menyelidiki aspek narasi dan pertunjukan 'Khabar Mati' secara menyeluruh, penelitian ini menyajikan analisis rinci terhadap teks serta penggambarannya di atas panggung. Tujuan utama dari penyelidikan ekstensif ini adalah untuk menawarkan wawasan berharga tentang kekayaan unsur artistik yang melekat dalam 'Khabar Mati.' Hasil dari penelitian ini siap untuk menjelaskan warisan artistik yang mendalam dari komunitas di wilayah Pesisir Selatan, memberikan pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang makna budaya dan estetika dari tradisi menawan dalam teater rakyat ini. Dengan menelaah secara mendalam unsur tekstual dan performatifnya, penelitian ini memberikan eksplorasi komprehensif terhadap 'Khabar Mati' sehingga berkontribusi pada apresiasi yang lebih mendalam terhadap nilai-nilai seni dan budayanya.

Kata kunci: artistik, rakyat, teater, pertunjukan

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INTRODUCTION

Texts and performances in folk theater play an important role in maintaining cultural continuity and development (Marzam et al., 2019). The texts used in performances have deep historical roots and are often closely linked to oral traditions passed down through generations (Hadijah, 2019). The use of classical texts or manuscripts that have existed for a long time not only illustrates the cultural richness of a society, but also plays a role in maintaining and passing on cultural heritage (Rahardi, 2022). Meanwhile, in folk theater performances, role execution, clothing, stage settings and the way the story is presented greatly influence the meaning and interpretation of the text being presented. This performance is also able to convey moral messages, daily life, history and cultural values of a society. These two aspects, text and performance, are interrelated and constitute the main basis for an authentic artistic experience in folk theatre (Maryelliwati et al., 2020). Understanding and analyzing the symbiotic relationship between text and performance in traditional theater is essential to comprehend the nuances and cultural depth within this art form.

Folk theater performances can face various challenges and problems related to various aspects. Among other things, problems in performances include limited resources that often affect the quality of performances (McRoberts et al., 2017), such as inadequate equipment and facilities (Iswandi et al., 2021). Cultural challenges occur in efforts to maintain the authenticity of stories, make-up and performance styles that are in accordance with local cultural values, especially in the era of modernization where traditional culture can be displaced by global cultural influences (Maryelliwati et al., 2018). Sustainability issues often arise from a decline in public interest in folk theater due to changes in entertainment preferences or a lack of understanding of the cultural values contained in the performances. Not only that, social problems can arise from staged stories which often reflect aspects of people's lives, such as gender inequality, social injustice and historical problems faced by society (Suryadi, 2010). Recognizing and overcoming these problems is essential in maintaining and developing folk theater as a valuable cultural heritage.

People's theater performances face the development of problems that become challenges in the contemporary era, including efforts to adapt performances to technology and the demands of an increasingly modern era (Maryelliwati, Rahmad, et al., 2022). These developments raise new issues regarding the adaptation of folk theater to the use of technology, such as digital media and online platforms, in maintaining relevance and appeal for audiences who are more accustomed to modern entertainment (Meigalia et al., 2019). Recent research also highlights aspects of community empowerment and the involvement of the younger generation in the preservation and development of folk theater, so that folk theater remains a living part of local cultural identity and sustainability. In addition, there are research results that emphasize the importance of creating an inclusive and sustainable folk theater platform, which can attract the interest of the wider community, enrich local culture, and strengthen intergenerational social interaction (Indrayuda & Samsuddin, 2021). Recognizing and responding to these issues is integral to ensuring a sustainable future for people's theatre (Mayori et al., 2023).

In line with the research context, the role of folk theater in the cultural realm has complex and interesting issues. Folk theater performances often pose various challenges, both in terms of presentation and their impact on cultural sustainability and related social issues (Nurila et al., 2023). These challenges can range from a lack of resources in maintaining the quality of performances, cultural challenges in maintaining the authenticity of stories and performance styles, as well as sustainability issues in maintaining public interest and support for folk theater amidst rapid cultural change (Zahra et al., 2023). Related studies state the importance of exploring the values and functions of folk theater in supporting the preservation of cultural heritage (Fauzi, 2020). An in-depth understanding of these issues can provide a valuable contribution in designing strategies for preserving and developing folk theater that are in line with the demands of the times and the needs of local communities (Febria et al., 2023).

Literature is a term that refers to a product of human culture (Semi, 2008:4). It embodies a type of communication that is beyond mere practical or formal usage and spans particular cultural values. The essence of literary art focuses on human experiences intertwined with socio-cultural

aspects, art, and belief systems. Indonesia's rich cultural diversity, extending from Sabang to Merauke, serves as a testament to the country's multifaceted nature (Rahmat et al., 2023). Each ethnic group's distinctiveness, including Minangkabau's regional literary traditions, becomes apparent from various angles. Minangkabau's written language differs from other Indonesian written languages, showcasing literary works, prose, and poetry (Maryelliwati, Efrinon, et al., 2022).

Studying literature, particularly regional literature like that of Minangkabau, provides insights into the cultural intricacies and expressions of Indonesia's diverse communities. Through literature, these cultures' values, traditions, and histories are recorded and preserved (Wahyono & Hutahayan, 2020). Moreover, Minangkabau's literature, whether prose or poetry, presents a unique linguistic perspective that mirrors the identity of the Minangkabau people (Hadijah, 2019). In summary, literature acts as a cultural repository and a means of communication that transcends practicality. It expresses Indonesia's cultural diversity through its regional literatures, such as that of the Minangkabau, which offers invaluable insights into their unique cultural and linguistic facets (Revita & Trioclarise, 2018). Exploring literature unveils the multifaceted nature of Indonesian culture and identity.

The classification of literature is outlined according to criteria such as means of literary work embodiment, including prose and poetry; object of literary work embodiment, centering on humans; and manifestation variety, dividing literary works into epic, lyric, and drama (Schrijvers & Postel-Coster, 1977). Literature contains diverse forms such as poetry, fiction, essays, criticism, and drama. Prose can portray various themes and issues separate from the primary intent of the author. Fiction, as highlighted by Ahadiat (2007:25), comprises short stories, novels, and romances. The term 'prose' isn't directly related to literary works but is more akin to exposition, requiring a set of events with characters, often fictional, to meet certain criteria (Davis, 1996).

Traditional Malay literature features "hikayat" as a prevalent genre, particularly extensive in quantity (Braginsky, 2001; Stark et al., 2022). "Hikayat" is a combination of comfort stories enriched by foreign elements and conveys both entertainment and instructive narratives (von Benda-Beckmann & von Benda-Beckmann, 2014). The research probes into the aesthetic allure of "Khabar Mati" as a folk theater performance text in the Southern Coastal region. "Hikayat" encompasses various types, including "hikayat ruhe," "hikayat epik," "hikayat fiksi," "hikayat fable," religious works, original treatises, and customs. "Hikayat Khabar Mati" is a narrative developed in the Pesisir Selatan Regency community, specifically in Nagari Duku Utara, representing a part of religious instruction narratives. "Hikayat Khabar Mati" is an enchanting narrative that has taken root within the community of Pesisir Selatan Regency, specifically in the picturesque village of Nagari Duku Utara. This narrative is categorized as a significant part of the broader literary tradition known as "hikayat seuma'un." What sets "Hikayat Khabar Mati" apart is its dual role in the community, where it entertains and serves as a medium for conveying profound religious teachings. This narrative weaves together a rich tapestry of cultural heritage, aesthetics, and spirituality, creating a captivating and enlightening experience for its audience. Set against the backdrop of Pesisir Selatan Regency, "Hikayat Khabar Mati" unfolds with an amalgamation of tradition and faith. It tells the tale of the community's collective history and spiritual journey, all while captivating the hearts and minds of its audience. Within the narrative are elements of wonder and beauty that reflect the rich aesthetics deeply ingrained in the Minangkabau culture (Kato, 2014). The characters, settings, and events within the narrative are entertaining and carry profound religious significance, making "Hikayat Khabar Mati" a unique and cherished piece of literature.

As the narrative continues to flourish within Nagari Duku Utara, it serves as a reminder of the enduring cultural and spiritual values that have defined the community for generations. Through its storytelling, "Hikayat Khabar Mati" instills a sense of pride and identity among the people, fostering a deeper connection with their roots and faith. In an ever-changing world, this narrative stands as a testament to the importance of preserving cultural heritage, aesthetics, and religious teachings, ensuring that they continue to enrich the lives of those who embrace its enchanting tale.

The folk theater performance of "Khabar Mati" is a mesmerizing cultural gem that unfolds in the Southern Coastal region of Indonesia, specifically in the enchanting village of Nagari Duku

Utara, part of Pesisir Selatan Regency. This traditional performance is deeply rooted in the local culture and has been cherished by generations for its captivating storytelling and profound aesthetic qualities (Karami et al., 2019). The "Khabar Mati" narrative weaves a tapestry of cultural richness, spirituality, and artistic expression. It serves as a window into the cultural heritage of the Minangkabau people, with its vibrant characters, enchanting settings, and intriguing plotlines. The performance is a harmonious blend of tradition and faith, creating an immersive experience that transports the audience to a world where aesthetics and spirituality coexist seamlessly (Kato, 1978). One of the remarkable aspects of "Khabar Mati" is its ability to convey religious teachings while entertaining the audience. It serves as a medium through which the community imparts profound spiritual lessons, making it a form of entertainment and a vessel for cultural preservation and spiritual enrichment (Hadler, 2013). As this folk theater performance continues to thrive in Nagari Duku Utara, it stands as a testament to the region's enduring cultural and artistic legacy, captivating the hearts of all fortunate enough to witness its magic.

However, through observations, the researcher noted a declining interest and a lack of concern among the younger generations regarding the narrative's development and values, particularly in aesthetics (Gani, 2020). The present generation is more influenced by contemporary developments, making them less engaged with Minangkabau's traditions and teachings. Therefore, preserving "Hikayat Khabar Mati" is crucial to reintroduce it to the Duku Utara community, enabling them to rediscover the narrative's teachings, beauty, and underlying aesthetics. This way, the community can revive and appreciate a narrative that had once faded into obscurity. By delving into the aesthetic values embedded within the folk theater performance of "Khabar Mati" and shedding light on its cultural significance, this research explores a cherished cultural heritage. The captivating narrative, spiritual depth, and artistic expression found in "Khabar Mati" make it a valuable piece of folklore, reflecting the rich traditions of the Minangkabau people. By uncovering and highlighting these aesthetic elements, this study contributes to preserving and disseminating cultural knowledge and folk heritage. The research offers insights into the aesthetics of "Khabar Mati" and underscores its importance as a cultural treasure. As such, it deserves to be shared with a broader audience as a cultural product and a repository of valuable knowledge. The publication of this research serves as a means of celebrating and safeguarding the cultural heritage of Nagari Duku Utara and the broader Minangkabau community.

Literature is a field of study that holds a myriad of perspectives. For some, it is regarded as an artistic creation infused with noble values and moral lessons, serving as an educational tool for society (Semi, 2008:2). In line with this, Eagleton (in Atmazaki, 2007:21) asserts that literature is not a belief or superstition, psychology or social science but rather the use of language governed by specific rules, both in terms of structure and other aspects. Literary works are not merely instruments to convey ideas, reflections of reality within society, or embodiments of elusive truths. Literature itself is the reality, and it is not very accurate to view it as an expression of the author (Rahmat et al., 2021). Literary criticism is a branch of literary studies that discusses the understanding, appreciation, interpretation, and research of literary works.

Furthermore, Semi (2008:2) states that literature is a creative work of art that serves as a medium with two primary functions. First, it conveys ideas, theories, emotions, thought systems, and human experiences of beauty. Second, it preserves these ideas, theories, emotions, thought systems, and beauty experiences. In explaining these dual functions, a piece of literature should be laden with substantial content and possess a beautiful, captivating, and enchanting delivery style. In other words, literature can act as a medium through which society continues to pass down its traditions and customs to future generations, ensuring that the practices of the past are carried into the future.

Oral literature is a form of literature conveyed through spoken language and is an integral part of oral traditions or folklore. This form of literature is considered primitive, and as such, oral literature is often regarded as the oldest form of literature, predating the tradition of written literature

because, during this period, societies were largely illiterate. Each piece of oral literature is passed down through spoken word, taking the form of myths, legends, animal stories, humorous tales, moral stories, and tales of catharsis (Radzi in Saman and Radzi, 2005:15). The advent of written tradition marks the maturity and intellectual progress of the Malay people compared to their earlier oral traditions. This transition to written tradition was facilitated by the introduction of writing systems, signifying the beginning of script dialects in the archipelago and the subsequent transformation of society. This transformation was influenced by the more advanced cultural influences of Hindu-Buddhism in its early stages and Islam later on. It is worth noting that oral traditions persisted even with the emergence of written tradition, demonstrating their resilience and continued relevance in society. In other words, oral traditions did not vanish with the introduction of written tradition but continued to thrive, even though abrupt changes were evident in the written tradition (Saman and Radzi, 2005:55).

The Minangkabau community possesses unique traditions alongside its distinctive matrilineal family system. Among these traditions, the Bakaba tradition is a unique practice that imparts valuable educational values to its audience. For example, it conveys communal and cultural living lessons, striving for a better life, and fostering noble virtues. As Junus (in Nurizzati, 1994:16) explains, Minangkabau customs place great importance on "budi" or moral character, as reflected in the adage: "*nan kuriak iyolah budi, nan merah iyolah sago. Nan baiak iyolah budi, nan endah iyolah baso.*" This proverb emphasizes the significance of good character and morality in Minangkabau culture. Initially, Minangkabau literature was transmitted orally through direct oral storytelling and memorization. Bakar (in Nurizzati, 1994:16) notes that these narratives were conveyed to a live audience by a storyteller, often accompanied by traditional Minangkabau musical instruments such as the "saluang" (a traditional wind instrument), "rabab" (a small drum), and sometimes incorporated into "randai" (traditional Minangkabau theater performances) (Nurizzati, 1994:16). This oral tradition added a rich and dynamic dimension to Minangkabau culture, preserving its values and teachings through generations.

Within the treasury of traditional Malay literature, the literary genre of "hikayat" stands out as the largest in quantity. According to Emies (in Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia 2006:83), "hikayat" can be an extension of stories that soothe the soul, enriched with elements from foreign tales. Furthermore, Sharif (in Majlis Peperiksaan Malaysia 2006:83) describes "hikayat" literature as narrative stories primarily designed for entertainment and instruction. Traditional Malay "hikayat" literature can be categorized into three groups based on their cultural influences: Hindu-influenced, Hindu-Islamic, and Islamic "hikayat" literature. The "Khabar Mati" narrative is a regional literary work developed in Duku Utara, Pesisir Selatan Regency. "Hikayat Khabar Mati" contains religious values as it conveys messages of faith and spiritual education. For example, a passage from the text reads, "*inilah balasan urang bariman, dek kuek ibadah manyombah Tuhan, ibadah koreh indak bandingan, tidaklah hirau dek kurang makan,*" which translates to "this is the reward for the faithful, for their strong devotion in worshipping God, their devotion is unmatched, they are not concerned about lacking food." This segment of the "hikayat" text highlights how one's devotion to worshipping God remains unwavering, irrespective of material possessions. Regional literature, such as "hikayat," carries distinct aesthetic values that signify the identity of a particular region as a supporter of regional literature.

METHOD

This investigation is a qualitative exploration that generates detailed data. As stated by Moleong (2010:6), qualitative research aims to comprehend various phenomena, including the experiences of the subjects under study, covering behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions. It embraces a comprehensive understanding by employing descriptive language in a specific natural context, utilizing diverse scientific approaches. The methodology utilized is descriptive, per

Moleong (2010:11), where the acquired data comprises textual content, images, rather than numerical data. This qualitative inquiry adopts a descriptive strategy to systematically, accurately, and factually present a portrayal, illustration, or representation of the details, attributes, and connections within the investigated phenomena. The goal is to offer a positive representation of the local narrative and its aesthetic characteristics, including elements such as unity, harmony, balance, and conflict, against the backdrop of literary values within the lines of the narrative known as "Khabar Mati" in the Duku Utara community, Koto XI Tarusan District, Pesisir Selatan Regency.

The focus of this study is an aged prose text, a narrative that has evolved and is frequently performed as a source of community entertainment during evening leisure time in Kenagarian Duku Utara, Koto XI Tarusan District, Pesisir Selatan Regency. This narrative, titled "Khabar Mati," is the subject of this research, which delves into its aesthetic attributes and is carried out in Kenagarian Duku Utara, Koto XI Tarusan District, Pesisir Selatan Regency. The data collection process for this investigation encompasses various tools, including original written texts from the "Khabar Mati" narrative from Pesisir Selatan Regency and is aimed at analyzing aesthetic values.

The data collection technique employed in this study entails acquiring the "Khabar Mati" narrative in the Minangkabau language, particularly the local dialect of Tarusan District, Pesisir Selatan Regency. Subsequently, the narrative is transcribed into written language and translated into Indonesian. Following this, an inventory is conducted, involving the documentation of data containing aesthetic values among the elements of unity, harmony, balance, and conflict. Subsequent to gathering the data, the research progresses to the data analysis stage to recognize, depict, and form conclusions concerning the aesthetic values within the "Khabar Mati" narrative in the Duku Utara community, aiming to (1) identify the aesthetic values present in the "Khabar Mati" narrative, (2) describe the aesthetic values found within the "Khabar Mati" narrative, and (3) draw conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

When attempting to grasp the idea of literature as a profound form of human expression, it transcends mere belief systems, superstitions, psychological analyses, or social sciences. It operates within a structured linguistic framework that defines its unique characteristics and rules. Literary works, be they poems, stories, or dramas, are not limited to being communication instruments, mirrors of societal conditions, or vessels for elusive truths. They possess an inherent reality of their own, distinct from the intentions or experiences of their authors. Literary criticism, therefore, emerges as a field of study dedicated to comprehending, appreciating, interpreting, and analyzing the complexities within these literary creations.

In the context of Minangkabau oral literature, it is encountered a rich tapestry of cultural heritage that holds enduring significance within the Minangkabau community. This oral tradition has thrived as an integral component of their cultural identity, evolving over generations and becoming a shared communal treasure. Minangkabau oral literature, steeped in tradition, is a foundational pillar for cultivating literary appreciation. Furthermore, it serves as a guiding light for community members, offering insights and interpretations of various cultural ceremonies and rites of passage, such as weddings, the enthronement of tribal leaders, and funerals.

Beyond its cultural and instructive roles, oral literature also serves as a potent source of entertainment. Through oral performances, often accompanied by traditional instruments, these narratives come alive, captivating audiences and transmitting their inherent values. This dynamic interaction between the performer and the audience enhances the impact of these tales and fosters a deeper connection to the cultural fabric of the Minangkabau community.

"Khabar Mati" is a hikayat that has flourished within the Minangkabau culture, particularly in Kenagarian Duku Utara. It carries a distinctly religious tone and serves as a moral narrative that explores the concepts of earthly existence and its consequences in the hereafter. This hikayat delves into the intricacies of life in this world and the retribution that awaits in the afterlife. One of the central themes of "Khabar Mati" revolves around the human experience of facing mortality. It vividly portrays the moment when individuals encounter their inevitable demise. The hikayat does not shy away from describing the fear and physical pain associated with the arrival of the angel of death, Izrail, who comes to claim the souls of humans.

Through its religious narrative, "Khabar Mati" imparts valuable lessons about the nature of life, the importance of faith, and the consequences of one's actions in this world and the hereafter. It is a contemplative work that encourages introspection and reflection on the choices made during one's earthly journey. "Khabar Mati" showcases its aesthetic qualities by portraying profound themes within the Minangkabau culture. While aesthetics often conjure images of beauty and artistic appeal, this hikayat takes a different form. The religious and moral narrative presented in "Khabar Mati" manifests the aesthetic elements embedded within the text. The religious tone and moral exploration in the hikayat are integral to its aesthetic appeal. The vivid depiction of the human experience in confronting mortality, the fear, and the physical pain associated with the arrival of Izrail adds emotional depth to the narrative. These elements contribute to the aesthetic richness of the text by evoking a strong sense of empathy and contemplation in the reader or audience.

Furthermore, the hikayat's ability to convey profound lessons about life, faith, and consequences aligns with the aesthetic goal of literature: engaging with and provoking thought and emotion in the audience. "Khabar Mati" is not merely a religious text but a literary work that uses aesthetic elements to engage its audience deeply and meaningfully. It encourages introspection and reflection, elevating its aesthetic value beyond mere storytelling. The aesthetic elements in "Khabar Mati" are intertwined with its religious and moral narrative, creating a unique and thought-provoking work of literature. Values are something good that is desired, aspired to, and deemed important by all members of society. For humans, values are the foundation or motivation for their actions and behaviors. According to Alfian (2013:202), values measure the degree of high or low news that can be observed, examined, or deeply understood in various physical or abstract objects. Values, at their core, do not arise spontaneously; rather, some prerequisites must be met for them to manifest.

In its historical context, aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that deals with beauty. This concept is derived from the idea of sense perception. According to Ratna (2007:2), historically, aesthetics is part of philosophy derived from the concept of sense perception. Etymologically, the term "aesthetics" comes from the Greek word "aistheta," which is also derived from "aisthe," meaning things that can be perceived through the sense's sensory perceptions. Furthermore, Atmazaki (2007:140) states that aesthetics is the philosophy of beauty and art (the philosophy of beauty and art). Therefore, the aesthetic perspective encompasses the aspect of beauty in all forms of art, such as visual arts, music, architecture, performing arts, literature, landscape design, and even culinary arts.

When discussing literature, one cannot escape the discourse on beauty, as literature is a form of art. Atmazaki (2007:141) states that a work of art is considered beautiful when it contains elements of beauty. However, the beauty in a work of art can never equal the beauty found in the creations of God. In other words, artists strive to emulate the eternal, masterful beauty found in God's creations through their art. A work of art becomes beautiful when it conveys emotions and has the power to evoke emotions, thus eliciting specific feelings in its audience.

In the rich tapestry of the hikayat Khabar Mati, the interplay of values and aesthetics weaves a compelling narrative. This traditional Minangkabau tale delves into profound themes that resonate with the human experience. At its core, this hikayat delves into the moral fabric of life, exploring the consequences of one's actions. It acts as a moral compass, guiding its audience through the intricate terrain of ethical choices and their repercussions. Through the narrative's vivid portrayal of mortality, this hikayat awakens a profound sense of reflection and contemplation. It does not shy away from depicting the fear and physical anguish accompanying the arrival of the angel of death, Izrail. This vivid portrayal is a stark reminder of the inevitability of human mortality, prompting its audience to contemplate the transient nature of life.

Within this hikayat, the aesthetics of storytelling play a pivotal role. The artful use of language, symbolism, and imagery engages the audience emotionally. It evokes empathy, fear, and introspection, creating a multi-dimensional experience. The aesthetics of this hikayat are not merely ornamental but serve as a vehicle for conveying its moral lessons with profound impact. The hikayat Khabar Mati embodies the harmonious fusion of values and aesthetics. It transcends mere storytelling as a moral guidepost and a source of artistic beauty. Its enduring significance lies in its ability to enlighten and move its audience, offering a glimpse into the complex interplay of human values and the aesthetics of life and death.

*Wahai sahabat tolan saudara
Hiduik ka mati janganlah lupu
Boka dijalan hendaklah koka
Sosa disitu pangona tiado*

Dear friends and brethren,
Life towards death, do not forget.
Provisions on the journey should be kept,
Regrets there will be of no use.

In the context of the hikayat Khabar Mati, this data shows an element of unity held together by the word "sahabat" (friends). The ideas in each line from the first to the fourth emphasize the interaction between friends to mutually advise and remind each other that death will approach anyone, anytime. No one knows when death will come to claim them. During their lifetime, people are urged to prepare provisions and everlasting deeds for the hereafter because after death, all deeds will cease, and there will be no room for regrets. This is clearly portrayed in the lines: "*Wahai sahabat tolan saudara, Hiduik ka mati janganlah lupu, Boka dijalan hendaklah koka, Sosa disitu pangona tiado.*"

The second element is balance or equality. In these lines of the hikayat, the arrangement of lines is highly harmonious. It is indicated by the fact that the first to fourth lines have nearly the same number of syllables as the sentence "*Wahai sahabat tolan saudara, Hiduik ka mati janganlah lupu, Boka dijalan hendaklah koka, Sosa disitu pangona tiado.*" The value of harmony reminds friends not to forget their provisions for the hereafter. These lines exhibit harmony because they stay within the same context. The third element is balanced, where the word in the second line differs from the first but reinforces it. In this line, there is a sense of balance between the second and third lines with the sentence "*Hiduik ka mati janganlah lupu, boka dijalan hendaklah koka.*" The balance in the second line explains that all humans will eventually die, and in the third line, there is an emphasis that all humans should prepare themselves with good deeds while they are still alive.

In the hikayat Khabar Mati context, these elements of unity, balance, and harmony reflect the broader themes found within the narrative. The hikayat delves into the inevitability of death, the moral imperative to prepare for the afterlife, and the consequences of one's actions in this world and the hereafter. Just as the lines of this data emphasize the importance

of preparing for the unknown moment of death, the hikayat imparts valuable lessons about the transient nature of life and the significance of faith and good deeds in facing the ultimate reality of mortality. The unity in these lines mirrors the unity of purpose in the hikayat, which is to remind individuals of the impermanence of life and the need for spiritual and moral readiness. The balance and harmony in these lines also echo the narrative's ability to evoke emotions and encourage introspection, making it a work of moral and aesthetic significance.

*Maukpun hadir sosalan tibo
Uang haroto manjadi dayo
Lalai baramal manyosa disano
Hampia ka mati datang marupo*
Death arrives, regrets follow,
Wealth and money hold no power,
Neglecting good deeds, regret awaits,
As death approaches, it resembles a shadow.

In the context of the hikayat Khabar Mati, this data contains elements of unity found in the first line with the word "maut" (death). This unity explains that when death comes, all people start to regret all the money and wealth that became their source of power, which ultimately cannot help them. Regrets only grow in the afterlife because they neglect to do good deeds during their lifetime and when death finally approaches. This is evident in the lines, "*mautpun hadir penyesalan datang, uang harta menjadi daya, lalai beramal menyesal disana, hampir mau mati datang menyerupai.*"

The lines also exhibit a sense of balance in the first line with the third and the second line with the fourth. Lines 1 and 3 have almost the same number of syllables as in the phrase "*mautpun hadir penyesalan tibo, lalai beramal menyesal disana.*" Similarly, line 2 and line 4 exhibit a similar balance with the phrase "*uang harta menjadi daya, hampir mau mati datang menyerupai.*" This balance emphasizes the impending arrival of death and the accompanying regrets.

Furthermore, there is an element of contradiction present in these lines. Despite the contradiction, it leads to something beautiful and harmonious, warning about the deceitful allure of wealth and possessions that cause people to forget about the afterlife until death comes knocking. This contradiction is evident in lines 2 and 4 with the phrase "*uang harta menjadi daya, hampir mau mati datang marupo.*" It highlights the tension between worldly pursuits and spiritual preparedness. In the hikayat Khabar Mati context, these lines underscore the moral and existential themes prevalent in the narrative. The verses serve as a reminder of the transient nature of worldly wealth and the importance of preparing for the afterlife through righteous actions. The hikayat, through its storytelling and poetic elements, reinforces these values and encourages introspection among its audience.

According to the analysis of the text "Khabar Mati," this hikayat has thrived within the Minangkabau culture. It carries a distinctive religious undertone and serves as a moral narrative that delves into the concepts of human existence on Earth and its repercussions in the afterlife. This hikayat explores the complexities of life in the earthly realm and the retribution that awaits individuals in the hereafter. One of the central themes of "Khabar Mati" revolves around the human encounter with mortality, vividly portraying the moment individuals inevitably face their demise. The hikayat boldly describes the fear and physical agony associated with the arrival of Izrail, the angel of death, who comes to claim human souls. Through its religious narrative, "Khabar Mati" imparts valuable lessons regarding the essence of life, the significance of faith, and the consequences of one's actions in this world and the hereafter. It is a contemplative work that encourages introspection and contemplation regarding the choices made throughout one's earthly journey.

"Khabar Mati" showcases its aesthetic qualities through its artful portrayal of profound themes within the Minangkabau culture. While aesthetics commonly evoke images of beauty and artistic allure, in this hikayat, aesthetics assume a distinct form. The religious and moral narrative in "Khabar Mati" embodies aesthetic elements ingrained within the text. The religious tone and moral exploration integral to the hikayat contribute significantly to its aesthetic allure. The vivid depiction of the human experience in confronting mortality, along with the associated fear and physical pain upon the arrival of Izrail, adds emotional depth to the narrative. These elements enhance the text's aesthetic richness by eliciting strong feelings of empathy and introspection in the reader or audience.

Furthermore, the hikayat's capacity to convey profound lessons about life, faith, and consequences aligns with literature's aesthetic objective, which aims to engage and provoke thought and emotion within the audience. "Khabar Mati" is not merely a religious document; it is a literary work that employs aesthetic elements to engage its audience deeply. It encourages introspection and reflection, thus elevating its aesthetic value beyond mere storytelling.

CONCLUSION

The Hikayat Khabar Mati stands out as a literary piece predominantly defined by its compelling religious narrative. Its significance lies in its ability to convey deep aesthetic values within the community by presenting moral and religious stories. It surpasses being a simple religious tale and emerges as a work of literature that intricately weaves together diverse aesthetic elements to forge a profound connection with its audience. At its core, this hikayat centers on its religious narrative, diving into themes related to mortality and the afterlife. By vividly portraying human existence in this world and the imminent consequences awaiting in the hereafter, it prompts the audience to reflect on life's essence and the importance of faith. Particularly distinctive is its unyielding depiction of the dread and physical suffering associated with the arrival of Izrail, the angel of death, which adds a poignant emotional dimension to the narrative.

Furthermore, "The Hikayat Khabar Mati" offers profound insights into life, faith, and the consequences of human actions. This resonates with the aesthetic purpose of literature, aiming to stimulate intellectual and emotional responses among its audience. This hikayat is not just a religious script but also a literary masterpiece that harnesses aesthetic elements to deeply engage its readers or viewers. It actively encourages introspection and contemplation, surpassing its role as a mere storytelling medium. In community performances, it serves as a form of entertainment and a platform for exploring moral and religious messages, making it an invaluable aspect of the Minangkabau cultural heritage. Therefore, this study holds significant value in preserving and upholding societal values, acknowledging the immense importance of traditional literature and considering how its transformation into a performance can enable its endurance amidst changing times. Even though its audience may be diminishing today due to the influence of technological advancements such as TV, the internet, YouTube, and social media, diverting attention from our cultural heritage, the efforts to preserve and revive hikayat like "Khabar Mati" continue to be pertinent and necessary. By understanding and cherishing the values embedded within this hikayat, our cultural heritage can be protected and presented in various performance forms to ensure its relevance and enjoyment by future generations.

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