

MARIDJAN WON THE BET

(An Anthropological Analysis of Maridjan's Religious-Cultural Fight in 2006)

Maridjan Menang Taruhan (Analisis Antropologis terhadap Pertarungan Agama-Budaya Maridjan pada 2006)

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ABSTRAK

Secara umum penelitian ini didasarkan pada fenomena menarik ketika Gunung Merapi meletus pada tahun 2006, yakni pemberontakan Maridjan sebagai abdi dalem untuk turun dari Merapi ketika Hamengkubuwono X sebagai raja memerintahkannya. Pertanyaan pokoknya adalah apa saja faktor-faktor perlawanan Maridjan?; dan apa yang Maridjan dapatkan dari taruhan itu sebagai pemenang? Pendekatan dalam penelitian ini adalah perspektif antropologis menggunakan pengamatan-terlibat dan dianalisis dengan metode kualitatif. Untuk mendapatkan data-data, peneliti tinggal di rumah Maridjan selama beberapa bulan di Merapi. Temuan penelitian ini adalah bahwa perlawanan Maridjan ditafsirkan sebagai peperangan yang diciptakan oleh media. Kedua, perlawanan Maridjan didukung oleh dua modal kekuatan; kekuatan kultural sebagai juru kunci Merapi dan modal wacana yang didukung oleh media. Ketiga, Maridjan memenangkan taruhan dengan mendapatkan prestise dalam status sosial di samping popularitas dan kekayaan.

Kata kunci: Abdi Dalem, Perlawanan, Raja, Media, Popularitas

ABSTRACT

This research was generally based on an interesting phenomenon in 2006, when Merapi erupted. There was Maridjan's rebellion as a royal servant to climb down from Merapi when Hamengkubuwono X as the king commanded him. The main questions were what were the factors of Maridjan's resistances?; what were the forms of Maridjan capitals in this fighting?; and what did Maridjan get from the bet as the winner? The approach of this research was anthropological perspective using participatory observation and analyzed by qualitative method. To get data, researcher lived in Maridjan's house for several months in Merapi. The findings of the study were there was Maridjan's resistance which was interpreted as a fighting created by media. The second was Maridjan's resistance supported by two capital powers; the cultural power as the Merapi's caretaker and the discourse capital supported by the media. The third was Maridjan won the bet by getting the prestige in his social status either popularities or wealth.

Keywords: Royal Servant, Resistance, King, Media, Popularity

INTRODUCTION

A study of Maridjan's resistance began when the writer read an article about Maridjan, a Merapi caretaker, in a newspaper dated April, 19th 2007. The article described how the people lived around Merapi couldn't do their daily activities. They had to go together to the refugee camp with the car supplied by the Yogyakarta provincial government to avoid Merapi eruption. The writer read in this article that Maridjan was an interesting figure because "he stood his ground that the Merapi would not erupt" while the Yogyakarta provincial government strictly ordered the people around Merapi to leave their place and move to the refugee camp. The 80 year old man became a controversial figure related to this Merapi phenomenon, because he stood his ground not to live his place in Kinahrejo although his position was very close to Merapi.

The writer started to read some literatures about the relation between Javanese kingdom figures with their royal servants with the background the writer mentioned above. The writer tried to understand the relation between these two. Most of these literatures didn't explain the social change of a royal servant to higher level in short level with the help from the capital cultural and media back up. This thesis would focus on the life of a royal servant as a common person who resisted his king order, and how this resistance brought him a status change. The writer chose to use the concept offered by Ben Anderson that the Javanese has been in the form of concentric circle. In this concept, the king's position is in the centre of the circle with an authority over his people's life. The Javanese authority concept is absolute and according to Michel Foucault where there is an authority, there is a resistance, and this explained how the single authority of Yogyakarta is fragile to a resistance act.

There are relations of power without resistance, the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised; resistance to power does not have to come from elsewhere to be real nor is it power. It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence like power resistance is multiple and can be integrated in global strategies (Michel Foucault, 1980: 142).

To shed some light over Maridjan's life as a royal servant means to study an area at the far north of Yogyakarta. This position had an important meaning in the concentric circle concept as said by Foucault. This condition would of course strengthen the resistance against the authority that centralized in Keraton Yogyakarta. The conclusion was that Maridjan's resistance against Hamengkubuwono X as the Yogyakarta authority's figure was a kind of resistance.

Weber and Schrieke¹ have also described that the fight between central and regional area would add the king's power if he was able to conquer other kingdom's and made the king as one of his head of governor, but he would lose the power if the head governor freed him and his area from the king's authority and gained their own power. The history of Javanese authority especially Yogyakarta has shown that resistance has shown some resistances and rebellions needed to be noted such as the rebellion of Mangir Boyo, Abdi Pragolo, Aryo Pekik and Trunojoyo. Yogyakarta separated from Surakarta Kingdom after the Gianti agreement in 1775 was also a result of a rebellion held by Mangkubumi on May 19th 1746 (Ricklefs, 1974: 63).

Maridjan's position as a common person to create a resistance could be found in his resistance. I found two capital powers that support his'. First was the cultural power namely Maridjan's legitimacy as the Merapi's caretaker, and second was a discourse capital created by the media.

¹ Stated by Schrieke, It was same with what Weber has described about a model of patrimonial state which is structured by Javanese administrative before colonial fight between centre and regional. B. Schrieke, *Indonesia Sociological Studies I*, (the huge and Bandung, van Hoeve, 1955), p 169-221. Compare with Th. Pigoued, *Java in the Fourteenth Century*, 4 (The Huge, Nijhoff, 1962), p. 521-536

METHOD OF RESEARCH

Maridjan's resistance was actually a bet using the cultural capital and media discourse. So, the writer used the participatory observation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1997:496, Babbie, 1998: 282) to gain data, and also from field interview and articles from the newspapers and other media. The writer lived in Kinahrejo, Pelemsari, Umbulharjo, Cangkringan, Sleman Yogyakarta to collect data as primary sources and read some written data as secondary sources (Bernard, 1994: 136). The place, the writer lived, was a house where Maridjan was born and grew up and also spent most of his life. The writer lived in gamelan (Javanese music instrument) room in the main auditorium inside the house. The writer stayed there since the end of March until the beginning of May 2007. The writer mixed with the life of Maridjan and the people in his neighborhood. The writer analyzed the data that he has gotten with data reduction process then, in displaying data form and the data presented in writing form. The writer's last step to make a conclusion was conclusion drawing and verifying data. The writer used contrast comparison, contextualization and theorization. The last step in the writer analyzes was data contextualization with literatures, and found the right theory for the whole contexts.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

There were some theories used to explain the king and his authority, one was mentioned by Michel Foucault about the relation between authority and knowledge and also one was from Ben Anderson about the Javanese authority. These theories would analyze the relation between central and regional area, in this case means the relation between Sultan as the king and Maridjan as the royal servant of Yogyakarta Hadiningrat kingdom. Here is the concept of Mandala Yogyakarta.

1. *Keraton* (palace) that is responsible for the inside government area (*Parentah Jero*), and also as a mediation between the Sultan and the outside governance.
2. *Nagara* (capital), the position of the outside government area (*Parentah Jaba*) where the

princes, chief minister and high government officials live.

3. *Nagaragung* or *Nagara Agung* (Big Capital) where most of this area is an occupation area for the princes and other high level officials.
4. *Mancanagara* (foreign country), area under the authority of Regional Government Official appointed by the Sultan. These officials responsible to the chief minister (Soemardjan: 1981).

Structural level below the Sultan is the king's descent. It's a group of royal with high rank official, called *sentono dalem*. Below this level is *priyayi* (aristocrat) or *abdi dalem* (royal servant) which consist of common people appointed to lower level government official. Other Yogyakarta people who are excluded from these groups are called *kawula dalem* or *kawula nagara* (common people) which consist of peasant, merchant, and staff of private and trade companies.

This description clearly explained the Javanese concept claiming that the Sultan as a figure who is by the kingdom, political, military and religious authority, has the power over the whole area in his authority. Sultan also gets supernatural guidance and support from various magical and palace heirloom's power. This great position is a result of the structure of Yogyakarta society and it strategically place at the centre of the concentric circle of the kingdom.

The position of Maridjan as a caretaker is a formal position of a royal servant in Yogyakarta Hadiningrat palace, and it had salary paid every month. The main duties of Merapi caretaker are first, to clean the way for the Labuhan ceremony, which held annually with the caretaker as the leader and the way cleaner. The second is to guide every person who wants to climb up the Merapi. These duties are effectively done by the caretaker before the occasion in June 2007.

The place where Maridjan lives was a support for his duties because it's positioned at furthest north of Yogyakarta area, it means at most outskirts of the concentric circle of Yogyakarta kingdom's

authority and strengthened his position to resist culturally against the Yogyakarta's absolute power.

Ben Anderson has clearly stated that every authority will create a resistance (Anderson: 80). Furthermore, if the authority is absolute and positioned in the centre of the kingdom's concentric circle (Mandala as the circle of influence and ambition). This circle has a complex geopolitical relations, because the longer the distance place the less the influence it's got from the authority. History proved that Yogyakarta, as a result of Mataram's long journey, has faced various kinds of resistances and rebellions. There are some great rebellions that should be noted when the power from Mataram's authority moved to Kartosuro (1680), namely Surapati rebellion (1686-1703), First Javanese Succession War (1703-1708), Second Javanese Succession War (1718-1723), Chinese War (1740-1745)².

The palace is a place where the king lives, and it has a spiritual meaning. It's surrounded by further circle where the furthest circle is the place where the common people lives. Palace as the center of the concentric circle automatically has become the whole rule's (*parentah jero*) source for other circles. The outside rule (*parentah jaba*) is led by the chief minister who has an authority over *nagara*, *nagara agung*, and *mancanagara*.

The long distance (geographically) between Kinahrejo and the Keraton made this area seldom get attention from the government, and this add the power of resistance for Maridjan (Laksono, 1990: 62). It's because Kinahrejo was a small village surrounding Merapi where was only proven by the minimum facility and coordinative of this place under Yogyakarta Provincial Government or Yogyakarta Kingdom. The result was the stronger position of the informal leaders of the local level at

the Merapi's slope, and Maridjan as the main figure and his "people" might say no longer respect to the Sultan and the kingdom's authority. Maridjan's local authority was supported by the legitimacy of knowledge as the Merapi's caretaker. This condition made him a "new king" with "orders" about any conditions of the Merapi which will be definitely obeyed by his people.

Maridjan as a central object in this research is a unique and controversial figure. This controversy is not something taken for granted in Maridjan's life at Kinahrejo. The image of Maridjan's is controversial to unfold the reality by his words and attitudes along the Merapi's fluctuation in 2006.

It's difficult to start analyzing Maridjan, how he got his popularity in a short time, an invulnerable and loyal caretaker of Merapi who dared to resist his king's order became a celebrity sought by curious people and the media. In months, almost all of the media involved in raising his popularity. Merapi as the most active volcano in Indonesia even in the world made Maridjan the most wanted figure. At the beginning of March 2006 when Merapi in normal condition, not even one media whether it's local or international mentioned Maridjan's name. Now, Maridjan is a very well-known figure with various images, invulnerable person, paranormal and celebrity and also an advertising star. At the end of March 2006, Kompas as one of the national newspaper published a news about Maridjan, because the change of Merapi status from normal to first degree cautions (Kompas, March 25, 2006).

In the middle of panic Merapi observer when they found out the increasing of Merapi activities, Maridjan at his house on April 18th with an unwind attitude didn't make even one statement Merapi and the Sultan. He just said over and over again that there wasn't one single clue that Merapi would

² A war has happened during Kertasura period, and it has related to the same indication that internal conflict has born in kingdom area, and then gave an effect of anarchy. And It has also growth oppositional power externally, either in East Java or in Central Java. M.C. Rickles, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi 1749-1792 A History of the Division of Java*, Oxford University Press, Ely House, London, 1974).

erupt. At early stage of this condition Maridjan hasn't shown his stubborn attitude toward the "order" from the government to move to the refugee camp. When the Sultan himself ordered the people living closest to the Merapi to move, Maridjan stated that he wouldn't resist. Even though on Wednesday, April 19th 2007 he still stayed at his place in Kinahrejo, the closest village to Merapi. He refused to be said resist his king order he considered himself to be lazy, and that the king himself asked the people to climb down so the people will obey immediately. *Indosiar*, one of the national television on one of its program, *Fokus*, predicted that the Merapi would erupt on Friday, April 28th 2006. Maridjan refused to move to the refugee camp. He was sure that Merapi won't endanger him. This royal servant of Yogyakarta kingdom chose to pray so if the Merapi erupted the lava wouldn't go through Kinahrejo, the village where he lived. His attitude was followed by about 200 people of his village.

The people who lived in Merapi slope were getting more panic due the raising activities of this volcano. It excluded lava and hot cloud on May 13th 2006. *Antara* reporter reported that Maridjan hasn't yet moved to the refugee camp, even the Merapi status was increasing from first level cautious to the highest level cautious. He still stayed in his house although it's only 3 kilometers away from Merapi. He said that he only undertook his job as ordered by Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX, whether the figure who asked him to move was not his king but his government. Because he was appointed by the palace not by the government, he wouldn't obey the government order. He also said that he never asked any person to follow his attitude; he chose to stay at his place and pray (TEMPO, May 13 2006).

The media then exposed the Sultan quotes as answers to Maridjan's statement. He said that the government was the highest institution. And the palace shouldn't give the order because it's part of the government. He only hoped that his orders would be obeyed. If some people had a thought he told them to go ahead. The government only tried to make the best effort for his people, and he

wouldn't force any people to follow his orders.

The strong statements of the Sultan in facing "the stubbornness attitude" of one of his royal servant became an interesting phenomenon for the media to expose. This exposing news on the media created a public opinion that Maridjan, the royal servant of Yogyakarta palace, dared to resist his king. And this created a great image. This spectacular news was followed thoroughly by the people. The media was getting interesting as the rising of the Merapi's activities, because it meant the rising of the fight between the king and his royal servant. Yusuf Kalla as the vice president asked the people around Merapi to move as soon as possible to the refugee camp. The Merapi status increased into the highest level in May 14th 2006 (Antara Yogyakarta, May 15 2006).

The sultan's opinion over Maridjan's attitude blamed him because as the Merapi caretaker who obeys the palace he should follow the government as well because it is part of the government. Yogyakarta as a province should follow the order of the central government and so should Maridjan (TEMPO, May 15 2006). The Sultan said that Maridjan's reason for refusing to move to the refugee camp because he followed the order of Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX is irrational. When *Detik.com* visited Maridjan on May 15th 2006 he said that he refused to move to the refugee camp because his area followed the palace's rules.

On May 27th 2006, a big earthquake shocked Bantul region (a region at the south of Yogyakarta). All of the media surrounded the Merapi moved their attention to the south, to the earthquake area (*Detik.com*, May 31 2006). On June 14th 2006, a small explosion happened in Kalibebeng and its status rose again to the highest level cautious. Once more, Merapi excluded hot lava to its 7 kilometers slope. The explosion destroyed Kalibebeng but it was not as big as predicted by the volcanologists.

Maridjan "stubbornness" was a symbol to his resistance supported by the cultural power of his position as the Merapi caretaker. This legitimacy was strongly planted in Maridjan's life as his claim on Merapi. Once, he mentioned

that a horse shepherd knew more than the owner (in this case it means the Sultan). Maridjan's attitude to stand his ground became an interesting phenomenon for the media to be exposed largely. They made controversial news which was actual and marketable. It is easily used by the media to increase the fight between the king and his royal servant. Maridjan as royal servant and the Merapi caretaker "refused" to move to the refugee camp while the Sultan "ordered" him to do it. His refusal was full of uniqueness constructed by the media and put it as a hot news for the readers.

According to Masduki, media intended to create a cultural conflict nuance in every natural disaster exposure, whether it's between the government and the people or between charismatic figures at local level. Media consciously and unconsciously popularized every person ready to make a controversial attitude³.

It should be noted here that Maridjan's main duty as the Merapi's caretaker was to take care of Merapi. Maridjan's capital added with the discourse that he had the biggest authority on everything about Merapi. Maridjan has changed from a simple and an honest figure into "suddenly" celebrity accelerated by various media in this country. Merapi's eruption in June 2006 was routine one, but it was used for his cultural resistance with the full support from the media, and also the discourse that has been created by the media itself. In fact, the public never saw or read the enmity directly; they only got it from the media. This condition could be categorized as the media's success for creating a cultural resistance nuance for Maridjan, the Merapi's caretaker. This figure was actually a mere an honest and a simple royal servant who in a short time turned into a celebrity because he dared to resist his king's order, Sultan Hamengkubuwono X, the ruler of Yogyakarta.

The writer would also analyze Maridjan's "bet". His resistance shown through his attitude to stand his ground by staying in Kinahrejo, became the seed of his indirect "resistance" to the king, Sultan Hamengkubuwono X. As a loyal royal servant he should obey every his king's order, but when he refused it, we could say he has resisted his order. The question was why did Maridjan dare to resist his king's order?

The writer has mentioned before that the media, whether it's visual or non visual, has significantly played and manipulated this enmity between the royal servant and his king. The media created a discourse that Maridjan as a royal servant dared to resist the "order" of his king, the Sultan.

Media facilitated his resistance to his king with a kind of bet. The bet was Merapi, and the players were Maridjan, the royal servant and Sultan Hamengkubuwono X, the king. In anthropological concept, this bet is called as "deep play". The rule of this play is that whoever the winner is he will get the prestige and the loser will have to pay his lost. Geertz said as adopted from Bentham's concept in theory of legislation:

"Almost all matches are sociologically relevant, that it is pit two different social groups against each other through their respective cocks. Thus conflict of social groups can occur at any level of group inclusiveness, from an institutional hostility relationship between two individuals to an opposition of two villages; fighting cocks. Almost every Balinese I have discussed is like playing with fire not getting burned. Active village and kin group, rivalries and hostilities, but in play form, coming dangerously and entrancingly close to the expression of open and direct interpersonal because after all it is "only a cockfight" (Geertz, 1980: 137).

The writer's concept about his bet was on a comparative perspective on how Maridjan's life has changed drastically. Maridjan was used to be an honest, a simple and sincere figure. This

³ This explanation can be reached at <http://www.mediacenter-ajiyogya.com> Media Center Aliansi Jurnalis Independen Yogyakarta by Mambo Generated: May 24, 2007.

impression was given by the chief of the village the first day I arrived in Kinahrejo. Mugiarto, Maridjan's childhood friend, said that Maridjan was a mere farmer's child who loved to find grass for his cattle and to work on his field. Wigyo, his elder brother, has the same opinion with Mugiarto that Maridjan was an astonishing figure. As a close friend who has spent his whole life with him, he has never seen even once, Maridjan's anger. The impressive things about Maridjan were his honesty and simplicity. Since his early years, he was well-known for his diligence. He often does fasting especially Javanese, sometimes even for 40 days until he got married.

The information about Maridjan and his family's life was mostly the same that they haven't changed much. He hasn't got much money, and he hasn't been wealthy. The money he got from the advertising he did with Chris John, the national boxer, he gave it to his neighbors, all about 360 families. Inside his simple attitude, his simple and humorous face, sometimes I found a stubborn figure that would stand his ground whatever happened. Many time guests went home disappointedly because of his refusal.

Maridjan has won the bet; the first proof was his changing status enlivened by the various media. The advertisement of *Sido Muncul* and *Kuku Bima* has launched his face nationally through the media, has created this image. His close relation to high level celebrities such as Oneng, Doni Kesuma and Chris John has made him a new celebrity.

The second was an invitation to watch the opening ceremony of the World Cup final in German. Munich's major himself invited Maridjan to German. This invitation was brought by a Germany reporter coming to his house. This was a proof that he was not only a well-known figure in this country but also in the world.

The third was the invitation from the Vice President and the Minister of Environment on the Celebration of World Environment Day in 2006 at the Malam Adipura. Maridjan cancelled his journey to Jakarta and sent a letter. In his letter, he apologized that he couldn't come to

Jakarta because he had a bigger responsibility, namely Merapi which at that time was in a critical condition. This letter was read by Roni Waluya the master of ceremony on that occasion (Antara news, Jakarta, June 12 2006). Maridjan stayed at his place and did his job although this assessment was not easily got but he preferred to do his job (Serasi Magazine, June edition, 2006).

The fourth was when Megawati, the former president, herself came to his house and gave him an insurance on his name on Tuesday, May 30th 2006.

The fifth was the visit of the PBNU chairman, Hasyim Muzadi, to the refugee camp and his house. He appointed Maridjan as the NU board in his area, and this was easily given. This condition gave him more religious legitimacy, although he hasn't done his religious attitude, such as praying five times a day, for a long time (NU Online, June 2006).

The sixth was an assessment *The Person of the Year 2007*. It was given because Maridjan was considered as a loyal figure and has successfully done his responsibility to his environment. This social prestige assessment was given together with the former Central Java Governor and former Chief of Central Java Police, which showed that he was no longer a common person.

The seventh was the assessment he got from his own resistance to his king. At the beginning of the Merapi's status fluctuation, the Sultan ordered him to move to the refugee camp, but he refused it. But after Maridjan "won the bet", the Sultan himself gave him a different perspective. He was considered as a person who strongly hold his given instruction and did his duty as the Merapi's caretaker. This was said by the Sultan Hamengkubuwono X at the dialogue in Pagelaran, Yogyakarta palace in front of ten thousands of Yogyakarta people. The Sultan said that Maridjan was a good example although he was only a common person who lived a simple life and sincere, but he knew how to fulfill his responsibility and the instruction given to him, and also his obligation. At that occasion, Sultan was accompanied by his wife Gusti Kanjeng Ratu

Hemas, his children and his children in law. There were also the Vice Governor of Yogyakarta Pakualam IX and four regents of the Yogyakarta province, also the Yogyakarta major. Sultan also said that it was impossible for him to leave his place and move to the refugee camp even if the Merapi erupts. If he leaved his place, it looked like a soldier who did a desertion. Maridjan wouldn't do that he preferred to die than to leave his responsibility. This attitude was good example (Kompas, April 18 2007).

Yusuf Kalla, the Vice President, said that he invited Maridjan so he could give a good example of his leadership. According to him, Maridjan was able to fulfill his responsibility to take care the palace's instruction to take care of Merapi whatever the risk, and of course, this needed a strong discipline (Kompas, April 16 2007).

What the Sultan said about Maridjan above could be considered as play to lower his own position as a king to beg for name and popularity. Maridjan's response to these praises was that they only gave him more responsibilities, and that's only a wordy praise. It was actually his biggest respect for the former Sultan Hamengkubuwono IX. He said that the former Sultan had great invulnerabilities (*Gatra*, No. 32, Juni 22 2006).

The social condition of Yogyakarta and Maridjan's resistance attitude against his king "order" could be clearly seen on the Yogyakarta people's restless because of development of modernity. This development has changed Yogyakarta tradition and reduced the spiritual nuance of the palace with all its values.

According to Ben Anderson's analysis, the phenomenon of mountain eruption, big flood, earth quake and other natural disaster in Javanese socio-cultural terminology was considered as the decreasing image of an authority. Because an ideal

authority supposes to have to control, take care and act about his surroundings. Maridjan's movement was a cultural movement of uneducated royal servant created by the help of media.

In short, I think the Yogyakarta people's restlessness has answered with the winning of this cultural resistance. Maridjan, the royal servant, has become a new king guards the Yogyakarta culture and lived at the most outskirt of Yogyakarta kingdom. This was popularized by his king, Sultan Hamengkubuwono X. The winning symbol of this cultural bet has beaten the king's authority structure. His popularity has been earned by the help of media, in fact, has successfully played. The ending of this bet was the winning of the royal servant figure who became a new king and the changing status in a short time. This could be seen from the Sultan attitude who became Maridjan's translator at the closing ceremony of National Coordinating Meeting of Golkar at Hyatt Hotel Yogyakarta on April 16th 2007, and it was a proof that the Sultan has admitted Maridjan's victory⁴.

CLOSING

Generally, I found three main clues from this research analysis as an answer. The first was the essence of Maridjan's social status change from an honest and a simple man into a popular celebrity. Maridjan's changing social status was in fact the resistance of a royal servant to his king's order. In history of Yogyakarta as the descent of a big kingdom in Java, Mataram, the absolute authority of Mandala Yogyakarta concept always creates a resistance in the rebellion form. Maridjan has certainly done this resistance that has been played beautifully by the media. The second was the capital of Maridjan's resistance. I found two main things used by Maridjan for his resistance namely his cultural legitimacy as Merapi's caretaker and the discourse has been created by the media.

⁴ This meaning was concluded from the simbolic actions between Sultan and Maridjan expossed at Kompas, in title "Maridjan tutup Rapat Golkar". This news gave a description that "Sultan Hamengkubuwono X menjadi penterjemah abdi dalemnya Maridjan". Kompas, April 16 2007.

Media has constructed a discourse that Maridjan as the Merapi's caretaker was a great figure who dared to resist his king's order. Maridjan's image was the main icon with the knowledge of Merapi's framework, an invulnerable figure who able to communicate with "Eyang Merapi", the ruler of Merapi. The third was Maridjan's changing status. Maridjan's resistance with staying at his place was another form of a bet. The bet was Merapi and the players were Maridjan as the royal servant and Sultan Hamengkubuwono X as the king. The "bet" was over and Maridjan won it, he got the prestige as his social status was changed. This winning was not only the winning of Maridjan as a figure in this political dramatization, but more this winning was a symbol of a cultural movement against the king absolute authority which was fading in the uproar of modernity's development.

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