

PRESERVING THE RUDAT TRADITION AS A MEANS OF ISLAMIC DA'WAH IN INDRAMAYU

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Abstract

The existence of rudat dance in West Java is almost extinct and not so popular along with the times and the impact of increasingly sophisticated technology and various modern games that are easily accessed by the millennial generation. Specifically in Indramayu Regency, rudat dance is still preserved by residents of Carik Block, Krasak Village RT.17 / RW.04 Jatibarang District through the Angling Dharma Rudat Dance Art studio actively, organised and continuously introduced to the surrounding community in various ways and da'wah which is acculturated with verses that display Islamic values. The purpose and objective of this writing is to find out the historicisation and meaning contained in the rudat dance seen from various sides. On the one hand as a means of da'wah, but on the other hand how the art of rudat dance to survive in the midst of the macrosociological currents of western culture which are not necessarily friendly to the norms and values of archipelago cultural life continues to uphold expensive assets and ancestral heritage as a mirror of the internalisation of the philosophy of traditional art with all its aesthetics. The methodology used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data in the study was obtained through the process of interviews and observations, the data that has

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been obtained is analysed through four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Keywords: Preserving, Rudat Tradition, Islamic Da'wah.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional art is an expensive asset that is priceless for every country in maintaining and preserving the cultural treasures of ancestral heritage that has early ethical and aesthetic values in realising the characteristics or identity of a great nation. The diversity of arts and culture in Indonesia cannot be separated from the habits of the people who live in it. Of course, people who live in an area will definitely form a different culture, so that Indonesia has several different cultures from each ethnic group. Diverse cultures are the wealth of a nation that should be maintained and preserved (Apriani, 2018: 3). Having natural wealth will not be more perfect if cultural diversity is not manifested in the personal devotion of the next generation of eccentric values of the culture itself, specifically the traditional art of Rudat Dance.

Rudat is a traditional art that initially grew and developed in the pesantren environment. Rudat art is an art of movement and vocals accompanied by rhythmic beats from a kind of tambourine or terebang. The verses of the songs contained in it are religious in nature, namely praise and sholawat that glorify Allah and His Messenger. The fundamental purpose of this rudat dance is to strengthen people's belief in Islam and the greatness of Allah and love for the messenger (Rosadi, 2016: 465-474).

In the most basic principles there is almost no significant difference in the procedures and implementation of the traditional art of rudat dance in Indramayu with other regions, but among some of these regions there are still those who consistently maintain traditional values by not changing any elements or elements, but there are also those who have begun to integrate the latest elements as an innovative artistic or performative tool (Mutia, 2018: 18).

The traditional art of rudat dance is still developing in the archipelago today, as developed by the Sasak tribe, Aikdewa Village, Pringgasela District, Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB). in Banten it was developed in Sukalila hamlet, Kagungan Village, Serang City, Banten Province. However, the art of rudat is more developed in West Java province, such as in Cirebon, Majalengka, Kuningan, Tasikmalaya, as well as Indramayu, which is universally in a variety of rhythms, meanings and poems with Islamic values (Balai Litbang Agama Jakarta, 2015: 134).

The reality of modern times that continues to run and develop, certainly has implications for the traditional art of rudat dance in various regions, more specifically in Indramayu. As we know that the sympathy and interest of teenagers towards rudat dance

is not so encouraging, due to various factors or causes that cannot be avoided, including the presence of gadgets or mobile phones that are massively continuously marketed with all the sophistication of features and all the facilities available. Another reason why rudat art is less popular? Because one of the supports for the preservation of the art of rudat dance has lost or has passed away the maestro. Maestro figures are very instrumental and influential to provide guidance through the rudat art dance forum or group itself. Another influence is the presence of modern music genres or genres that are so rapid and the unbalanced publication of rudat dance with modern music as well as other traditional dances supported by sponsors whose business value provides profit value from the economic side.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this research is qualitative method. According to Bogdan and Tylor in Moleong (2001: 3), qualitative methodology is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written words or writings from people and observed behaviour (Moleong, 2001). Descriptive research is a collection of data in the form of data, images and writings (Sugiyono, 2011). All data collected becomes the key answer to the problem under study. Thus, the research report will contain data quotations to illustrate the presentation of the report. The data comes from interview scripts, field notes, videos, photos, personal documents, notes or memos and other official documents (Moleong, 2001: 6). The use of a descriptive approach is expected to produce data related to this research (Sugiyono, 2011).

This research was conducted in Carik Block, Krasak Village RT. 17/RW. 04 Jatibarang District, Indramayu Regency, through the Rudat Angling Dharma Dance Studio. This research was conducted on Tuesday, 24 October 2023, at 13.00-15.30 WIB, the object of this research is Rudat Dance. The subject of this research consisted of several informants who served as sources. In the fundamental principle this section explains how the research was conducted. This research uses qualitative research which really only describes what is found or occurs in a particular scene, field or region. Data collection techniques researchers conduct observation, interviews, documentation, and literature review. In the data analysis technique, this research uses descriptive analysis which is an analysis technique that should try to solve the problems faced today based on data. Furthermore, the data was analysed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The process of data analysis is carried out repeatedly so that complete and complete data about the art of rudat Indramayu is found.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of Rudat Dance in Indramayu

Some of the references needed to dig up information or collect data about the art of rudat dance include resource persons as well as classic documents in the form of ancient manuscripts. We tried to come to the Indramayu Arts Centre, Jl. Veteran No.3. Lemahabang District Indramayu Indramayu Regency. Post. 45212, (Tuesday, 24 October 2023, 09.00-10.30. Wib) and met with the Chairman of the Indramayu Arts Council (DKI), Mr Ray Mengku Sutenta, who was elected by acclamation at the 8th Indramayu Artists Conference (Museni) for the 2022-2025 Period on Sunday, 27 March 2022 at the Mama Soegra Arts Building, Indramayu Regency. He is also the leader of Sawo Kecik Indramayu Theatre, according to his explanation, that the art of rudat dance in Indramayu when viewed from a historical perspective is still not very clear or there is no complete and detailed record of rudat dance in Indramayu, but from the results of our interviews the data needed is sufficient to complete the data we need, which will be explained at the next stage.

However, Mr Ray Mengku Sutenta suggested that we visit the Angling Dharma Rudat Dance Studio on Jl. By Pass or Jl. Angling Dharma No. 08. Blok Carik RT. 017/RW. 004 Krasak Jatisawit Village Jatibarang District-Indramayu and to meet the Kuwu or Village Head Mr. Khairul Isma Arif or Mr. Nono Karsono as the management of the studio, still on Tuesday, 24 October 2023, at 13.00-15. 30 WIB and dialogue and interview them with quite encouraging results, but did not feel quite satisfied in collecting data, the search was then continued on the same day, at 17.00 WIB trying to confirm and communicate with Mama Taham and Mrs. Sidem, as Leaders of Mulya Bhakti Dance Studio Jl. Raya Jatibarang-Karangampel, KM. 3, Tambi Village, Sliyeg-Indramayu District, the results were the same, not many people knew who created the rudat dance art. At another time but on the same day, at 19.30 WIB we tried to contact Edi Supriyadi, S. Pd, as the Leader, Mrs Aerli Rasinah and Rani Fitriyah as the main coaches of Mimi Rasinah Mask Dance Studio Jl. Pandawa II No.1 RT. 008/RW. 004 Pekandangan Village, Indramayu Sub-district, Indramayu Regency, the answer was the same, not knowing for sure.

The journey to find sources for the history of rudat art continued the next day on Wednesday, 25 October 2023 at 08. 30 WIB, we contacted Mr Dede Jaelani (45 years old), a resident of Muntur Village, Losarang District-Indramayu who is still trying to revive the art of trebang dance which for 20 (twenty) years has almost disappeared and extinct, accompanied by Jumbleng village elders named Mr Sarwa, Mr Carkim and Mr Caya who were once a team of Trebang Randu Kentir Art instruments in the 1970s, saying that the Rudat Art in Indramayu is not known exactly when the rudat art has existed in Indramayu.

Without despair, the investigation continued at 13.30 WIB, in an effort to collect data related to the art of rudat we tried to meet Drs. Wergul W Darkum as the Director of various traditional colossal art performances in Indramayu Regency at the Awang Uwung Contemporary Dance Studio (Dance Theatre) Address: Jl. Jendral Sudirman (in front of the petrol station) Lemah Mekar Village, Indramayu. He is also an advisor to the board of Indramayu Arts Council (DKI) as a result of the 8th Indramayu Artists Deliberation (Museni) Period 2022-2025 on Sunday, 27 March 2022 at the Mama Soegra Arts Building, Indramayu Regency.

Based on the results of interviews and investigations with Drs. Wergul W Darkum, Ray Mengku Sutenta, Khairul Isma Arif, Nono Karsono, S. Pd. Pd, it can be explained that the three figures in providing explanations related to the origin of rudat dance art in Indramayu when viewed from the historical side until now not so much is known because the elder figures who know the intricacies of rudat art have passed away, there are only reviews that approach the authenticity or validity of an information that the development of rudat dance art in Indramayu is not so far from the entry of Islamic teachings in Indramayu. It can be seen from several historical sources that at least the teachings of Islam spread to the Indramayu region by two figures, namely Sheikh Datuk Khapi and Sunan Gunung Jati.

The text of Babad Dermayu states that in 1415 Sheikh Datuk Khapi came to Cirebon to spread Islam (Dasuki, 1977: 50). According to Purwaka Caruban Nagari, Sheikh Datuk Khapi is none other than Sheikh Nurjati or Sheikh Idhopi, a scholar from Arabia who came to Java in 1420 and settled in Singapore, a village in Pasambangan, Cirebon (Ekadjati, 1975: 88; Sunardjo, 1983: 38). Although Sheikh Datuk Khapi concentrated his activities in Cirebon, his Islamisation also reached the Indramayu area, especially in the Pabean coastal area (Ekadjati, 1975).

In 1471 Sunan Gunung Jati also Islamised the Indramayu area centred on the Babadan area. Regarding the Muslim community in Indramayu Tomé Pires who came in 1513 stated that in Cimanuk there were many Muslims, but the syahbandar was not Muslim, but was held by a Chinese descendant who at that time sailed to trade with Admiral Cheng Hoo to trade as well as preach to Palembang to the island of Java and once stopped at Pabean Beach which was crowded with people of Arabic descent and Javanese Cirebon who participated in trade and became fishermen. However, according to local folklore, the owner of Syahbandar later converted to Islam through the services of Sunan Gunung Jati. (Dasuki, 1977: 51).

In spreading Islam in West Java and Banten, especially Indramayu, Majalengka, and Kuningan, Sikh Syarif Hidayatullah was assisted by Ki Dipati Keling, Nyimas Gandasari, Prince Karangkendal, Prince Panjunan, Prince Sukalila, and his own father-in-law Prince

Cakrabuana, all of whom were among the most influential figures in spreading Islam in Cirebon. In teaching various kinds of Islamic religious knowledge including in the field of folk art. The Cirebon princes in developing the spread of Islam through cultural acculturation approaches that existed at that time, such as wayang, kidungan or praise, including the introduction of the traditional art of Rudat Dance which is performed using genjring musical instruments which are also called terebang. The musical instrument was developed from one type to five types that contain the meaning of the five pillars of Islam. The performance of Trebangan art is intended to connect the human mind with the Creator, which in turn is called rudat.

Etymologically, Rudat comes from the word raudhah or raudatun which means flower garden. The word raudhah is also used to refer to the prophet's garden located in the Prophet's mosque, Medina. There are also those who say rudat comes from the word redda or rod-da which means to deflect an opponent's attack, in the last meaning, rudat is defined as the musical instrument itself.

Rudat art in Indramayu according to Kiyai Kayin and Kiyai Idris, the first spreaders of Tarekat Rifa'iyah on the Pantura route in Sukalila village, Jatibarang sub-district around the 19th century, until it entered the Krasak Jatisawit Jatibarang village area. Kiyai Kayin and Kiyai Idris had learnt Tarekat Qodiriyah Naqsabandiyah from Sheikh Karim of Banten, but both of them were more suited to the tarekat that they initially pursued until introducing the Art of Rudat Dance from Banten to Indramayu. It began to develop and attract people in the Jatibarang-Indramayu area and its surroundings through Tajug (musholla) or mosques that existed at that time, as entertainment or association of the congregation or santri in their spare time, with songs whose contents praise the greatness of Allah SWT while dancing with martial arts movements.

This art is mostly performed by men because it is only in the form of terebang musical instruments and singing, but in its development it was later given modifications in the form of dances performed by women. At that time, Rudat art functioned initially as a means of entertainment or a medium for the association of santri in their spare time. On this occasion, the students sang praising the greatness of Allah swt. while dancing with martial arts movements until now it is more familiar in the community as Rudat Dance (Dais, 2018: 111).

Rudat art or often also called terbangan, experienced a shift in function and then became multifunctional, including as a syiar of Islam from preachers / ulamas and santri to the community so that it can be displayed at events related to religion or Islamic syiar, such as:

- a. Mauludan or commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.
- b. Rajaban, which commemorates the Isra Miraj event.

c. Commemoration of the Islamic New Year

Even introduced during the Wedding or Circumcision Tasyakuran event in the area (interview with Kuwu / Head of Krasak Village Mr Khairul Isma Arif, S. Pd) According to Drs.Wergul W Darkum, Ray Mengku Sutenta, Nono Karsono, S. Pd, actually Rudat Dance has spread to various regions such as Garut, Cirebon, Kuningan, Tasik, Banten, Lombok and so on. each region has its own characteristics in developing Rudat Dance. Significantly that can be seen is from the elements of language, costumes, and some movements that are innovations from Rudat activists in the area. In general, Rudat is an art performed by a group of people, in which there are movements, namely, standing by installing a stance with hands clenched in pairs, parry movements, hitting movements, defensive attacks, dukuh depok movements. All of these movements have their own value content. The recitation of salawat that is often chanted is addebaa al barjanji. one example reads "Ashala tu alaan nabi, ashala tu ala rasul, as shafi il abthahi wa muhammad aa rabi".

Rudat art has developed in the village of Krasak Jatisawit-Jatibarang for approximately 80 years, and even then with all kinds of challenges of the era that certainly have ups and downs because regeneration is not easy to introduce to young people who are more likely to choose single organ entertainment, processions or modern depok horses or karaokean.

According to the Kuwu/Head of Krasak Village, Mr Khairul Isma Arif, S.Pd, the need and importance of developing and preserving the art of rudat dance in Indramayu Regency is as follows:

- a. As a very expensive national asset and aesthetically cultured ancestral heritage
- b. As a means of preaching Islam in Indramayu, especially the Krasak village area, and generally Indonesia
- c. As a very educational entertainment for the younger generation to appreciate and care for their regional culture
- d. As a special icon of the village of Krasak Jatisawit-Jatibarang in certain events so that it can appear for promotion as well as an economic development event

As a unifier of the community and at the same time a silaturahmi in an effort to maintain Islamic values and brotherhood.

The Meaning of Tradition

Tradition means hereditary customs (from ancestors) that are still practised by the community. It can also be interpreted as an assessment or assumption that the existing ways are the best and right (KBBI, 2005: 1208). Another word that has almost the same meaning is culture. Tradition is often discussed with customs. There are things that are closely related to tradition, namely character, and geographical conditions. All traditions

are something that is created. Traditions and customs are created for a variety of reasons. Tradition develops with the flow of time, but can also be changed or transformed according to the will of those who are competent over it (Ahmad Muhakamurrohman, 2014, 114-115).

Tradition is part of the elements of the cultural system that exists in society. Tradition is one of the legacies given by previous ancestors in the form of culture, which has been lived for several hundred years and is still carried out by those born later. The tradition was passed down by the previous ancestors because it was believed to provide life guidance. This tradition will be of good value to those who have it, it cannot be replaced or abandoned (Bungaran Antonius Simanjutak, 2016: 145).

Humans are cultured creatures as well as symbols. Culture consists of values, beliefs, and abstract perceptions of the universe that are behind human behaviour, and which are reflected in behaviour. All of that is the common property of the members of society, and if people act in accordance with it, then their behaviour is considered acceptable to society (Haviland 1999: 331-339), The following characteristics of culture, among others:

- 1) Culture is a common property
- 2) Culture is the result of learning
- 3) Culture is based on symbols

Culture in society has several elements. In Koentjaraningrat (2002:2), seven universal cultural elements are mentioned, among others:

- 1) Religious system and religious ceremonies
- 2) Community system and organisation
- 3) Knowledge system
- 4) Language
- 5) Arts
- 6) Livelihood system
- 7) Technology and equipment systems (Mohammad Dzofir, 2017: 115).

The Meaning of Preserving

Preservation as an activity or carried out continuously, directed and integrated in order to realise certain goals that reflect the existence of something that is permanent and eternal, dynamic, flexible and selective. Cultural preservation is an effort to maintain the values of art and culture, traditional values by developing manifestations that are dynamic, flexible and selective, as well as adjusting to situations and conditions that are always changing and developing.

Widjaja (1986) defines preservation as activities or carried out continuously, directed and integrated in order to realise certain goals that reflect the existence of something that is permanent and eternal, dynamic, flexible and selective (Widjaja in Ranjabar, 2006: 56). Maintaining and preserving Indonesian culture can be done in various ways. There are two ways that people, especially as the younger generation, can support cultural preservation and participate in maintaining local culture (Sendjaja, 1994: 286), namely:

1. Culture Experience

Culture Experience is the preservation of culture by directly engaging in a cultural experience. For example, if the culture is in the form of dance, then the community is encouraged to learn and practice in mastering the dance, and can be performed every year in certain events or festivals. Thus, local culture can always be preserved.

2. Culture Knowledge

Culture Knowledge is the preservation of culture by creating an information centre about culture that can be functionalised into many forms. The purpose is for education or for the development of the culture itself and the potential of regional tourism. Thus the younger generation can enrich their knowledge about their own culture.

Apart from being preserved in the two forms above, local culture can also be preserved by getting to know the culture itself. Thus, at least cultural piracy by other countries can be anticipated. The problem that often occurs in society is that sometimes we do not feel proud of our own products or culture. We are more proud of imported cultures that are actually not in accordance with the nation's personality as an Easterner. Local culture is starting to be eroded by the times, because people, especially the younger generation, lack the awareness to preserve it. As a result, we only speak out when other countries are successful and famous, with the culture they take secretly. Therefore, the role of the government in preserving the nation's culture is also very important. After all, the government has a very large role in efforts to preserve local culture in the country (Koentjaraningrat, 2010).

The government must also implement policies that lead to efforts to preserve national culture. One government policy that deserves support is the appearance of regional cultures at every major national event, such as dances, folk songs and performances of sarong ikat and so on. More concretely, lately President Joko Widodo has required all of his staff to wear traditional clothing based on their region

of origin for every important national event such as the Indonesian Independence Day on 17 August every year.

This needs to be appreciated because it is one of the efforts in preserving Indonesian culture. All of this is done as an effort to introduce local culture to the younger generation, that the culture displayed is a legacy from their ancestors, not from neighbouring countries, as well as efforts through formal education channels (Ranjabar, 2006: 34). The community must understand and know the various cultures they have. The government can also focus more attention on local content education of regional culture.

In addition to the above, there are still other ways to preserve local culture (Yunus: 2014: 123), namely:

- a. Improve the quality of human resources in promoting local culture.
- b. Encourage the community to maximise the potential of local culture along with its empowerment and preservation.
- c. Trying to revive the spirit of tolerance, kinship, hospitality and high solidarity.
- d. Always maintain Indonesian culture so that it does not become extinct. Strive for the community to be able to manage local cultural diversity (Hildigardis M. I. Nahak, 2019: 171-173).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that rudat dance in Indramayu is still being preserved as an Islamic cultural heritage without being affected by the dynamics of the development of other musical genres as well as the global flow of westernisation that has hit the younger generation. This dance in its journey appears in various momentum held by the community with *ikhtiarisasi* continues to maintain and maintain ethical values, aesthetics as well as eccentric Islamisation that will not be tainted with all modifications of rhythm, poetry, even dance movements that have their own characteristics to remain loved by the community until the time limit that is not eroded by the times.

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