

Transformation of *Rinding Gumbeng* Traditional Art

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ABSTRACT

Rinding gumbeng is a traditional art from Ngawen, Gunungkidul, Special Region of Yogyakarta. Truthfully, *rinding gumbeng* is a musical accompaniment to the rice harvest ritual ceremony. As time goes by, *rinding gumbeng* has both value and function transformations. This study used qualitative research methods. In this study, the data were obtained through observation, interview, and documentation. The result showed that the transformation stage of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art includes: (1) traditional ritual ceremony, (2) society entertainment, (3) tourism object, and (4) medium of social education. The first function is shown by the Ngawen people who sound *rinding* when the rice harvest arrives in the hope that Dewi Sri is happy and willing to give blessings to the rice to be harvested. The second function is indicated by the number of *rinding gumbeng* activities that are present at art festivals or events held in Ngawen. The third function is indicated by a large number of students and foreign tourists who undertake study tours to learn this musical instrument, which is to play and make this musical instrument. The last function is indicated by the learning activities of *rinding gumbeng* in formal and informal education. As the result, the traditional arts can be preserved and existed.

Keywords: *Rinding gumbeng*, transformation of function, traditional art

1. INTRODUCTION

The wealth of Indonesian art and culture is a very valuable heritage for the population and society. The beginning of the nation's progress begins with the preservation of traditions which will ultimately strengthen the identity of a nation. Indonesia as the largest archipelago country in the world has a wealth of natural resources and cultural arts. Every region in Indonesia has its own arts and culture that are different from one another. The arts and culture then become the characteristics of each region in Indonesia. As stated by Koentjaraningrat [1], art is one of the universal cultural elements as well as the most important element in Indonesian culture. Every element of universal culture is of course also incarnated in the three forms of culture, namely in the form of a cultural system, in the form of a social system, and in the form of physical cultural elements. Another thing was also expressed by Umar Kayam [2] that art never stands apart from society as one of the most important parts of culture. Art is an expression of the creativity of the culture itself.

Traditional arts that have been developed from generation to generation in Indonesia, which have elements of belief and interpretation of social traditions, generally become a characteristic of the traditional art itself. One of the various *traditional arts in Indonesia* is *the traditional art of rinding gumbeng* which originated from Ngawen, Gunungkidul. *Rinding gumbeng* is a

musical instrument made of bamboo. *Rinding* is a musical instrument that is always sounded by sticking it in the mouth while *gumbeng* is almost like a drum made from bamboo played by being hit. In its application in the society, *rinding* and *gumbeng* function as accompaniment. In this art, there are also singers called *penyekar*. Even based on existing history, *rinding* instruments existed before the gamelan was created, but it is not known exactly in what year the *rinding* musical instrument first existed.

In ancient times, the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* functioned as an accompaniment to the ritual ceremony for the rice harvest of the Beji, Ngawen, Gunungkidul society. The sound of *rinding* is described as the sound of a frog. In the rice harvest ritual ceremony, there are two ceremonies, namely the ceremony for moving the goddess Sri and the ceremony for bringing down the goddess Sri. There are songs that are sung in the rice harvest ritual ceremony, namely *ijo-ijo* and *ilir-ilir*. However, gradually along with the times, the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* has undergone many transformations both in terms of value and function. For example, at this time the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* not only functions as a traditional ritual ceremony but also functions as a society entertainment, a tourism object, and a medium of social education. Many factors have caused changes in the function of this traditional art. One of them is the number of social agents in the village of Beji, Ngawen, Gunungkidul who have new ideas and concepts with existing rules and resources. Therefore, this study aims to reveal how this

traditional art can transform and what are the factors that cause the transformation of this art.

2. METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative method. Through the use of this qualitative method, an understanding of the complexity of a cultural and societal phenomenon is obtained. Qualitative research is an approach and method that has a value for studying a phenomenon [3]. The benefits obtained by qualitative research depend on the research design, such as documenting the observations of culture, new insights, understanding of individual and social complexity as well as criticism of social order.

Gunungkidul is one area that has a diversity of arts and cultures. Although they have many sources of artistic and cultural knowledge, they are rarely found documenting artistic and cultural activities. Therefore, Ngawen sub-district was used as a research location with the study object of the traditional *rinding gumbeng* musical instrument. The research subjects consisted of local residents including traditional leaders, *rinding gumbeng* traditional musical instrument players, teachers and students in Ngawen Sub-district schools, as well as the people of Ngawen.

In qualitative research, researchers become the main instrument in data collection through field observations and interacting with the subject and object under study. This is as expressed by Mohajan [4] that researchers are the main instrument in collecting data and analysing data by going into the field. Researchers must interact with subjects and objects of research to observe the behaviour in order to build abstractions, concepts, and theories. Before conducting research in Ngawen, an audio-visual recording instrument is prepared to document the traditional *rinding gumbeng* musical instrument play, conducted interviews, and books to record observations such as the involvement of community members in the function of the traditional *rinding gumbeng* musical instrument as an accompaniment of traditional ceremonies, entertainment, tourism object, and art education.

Data collection techniques in this study were carried out in three ways, namely observation, interview, and documentation. The data analysis process used interactive data analysis by Miles-Huberman [5] which has three concepts including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is the first process that has a pattern for sorting, selecting, and simplifying data. Data presentation refers to the activity of presenting data or information that is considered to have the potential to draw conclusions. Drawing conclusions is an activity to formulate data that converges on the validation of the data displayed in the research report but depends on the estimated

research time and data collection which is considered to have a saturation level [6].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 *Rinding Gumbeng*

Rinding is derived from Javanese. This musical instrument is called *rinding* since when it is sounded it can sound like creeps (bristling of the hair on its neck). The meaning of this musical instrument is an original folk art whose lives are in remote places [7]. *Gumbeng* is a traditional musical instrument originating from Karangmojo, Gunungkidul. This musical instrument is called *gumbeng* because of its shape which resembles a tube or bamboo tree. The meaning of this musical instrument is the original art of commonalty who live in remote areas [7]. At first, the function of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art was an accompaniment in the traditional ritual of harvesting rice.

Initially, the farmers only used one musical instrument during the rice harvest ritual that is *rinding*. As time went on around the 80s, *rinding* slowly merged with *gumbeng* who came from the Karangmojo, Gunungkidul so that the traditional music art named *rinding gumbeng* was created. The *rinding gumbeng* artists try to make musical accompaniment instruments that resemble a set of gamelan, an Indonesian orchestra made up especially of percussion instruments (such as gongs, xylophones, and drums), and *angklung*, an Indonesian musical instrument made from bamboo. Until now, there have been many bamboo musical instruments that have been created as *rinding gumbeng* complementary such as bass, drum, and *kecrek*, an instrument used by an itinerant welder to attract the attention of would-be customers. This complementary musical instrument was developed since it was adjusted to changing times. In addition to developing musical instruments, nowadays, the songs sung in the *rinding gumbeng* traditional art have also undergone many changes. In ancient times, the songs used to accompany traditional ritual ceremonies were *ilir-ilir* and *ijo-ijo*. However, at this time, the modern songs are used in *rinding gumbeng* traditional art. This is due to the transformation of the function in *rinding gumbeng* traditional art, namely as a society entertainment, a tourism object, and a medium of social education so that the songs performed are adapted to the conditions and characteristics of society at this time.

3.2 *Transformation of Rinding Gumbeng Traditional Art*

The development in the form of presenting a traditional art is caused by changes in the surrounding environment. These environmental changes will greatly impact social changes in society. These social changes will result in cultural changes that occur in society. This is in

accordance with Setiadi [8], there are five factors that cause cultural change, namely: (1) environmental changes, (2) changes caused by contact with another group, (3) changes due to discovery, (4) changes that occur because society or nation adopts some cultural elements that have been developed by other nations in the area, and (5) changes that occur because a nation modifies its lifestyle by adopting a new knowledge or belief, or because of changes in lifestyle and its conceptions of reality.

Cultural changes were also experienced by the people of Ngawen, Gunungkidul. This can be seen in the activity of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art in this area. The *rinding gumbeng* traditional art has undergone many transformations in terms of function. Changes that occur in the function of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art are caused by changes in the community's environment, the number of cultural elements that have entered, and changes in the lifestyle of the Ngawen people following the modernization of the times. As a result, there are many social agents who have new ideas to develop Ngawen region in accordance with the times. Nowadays, there are four functional changes that occur in *rinding gumbeng* traditional art.

3.2.1. Traditional ritual ceremony

The rice harvest ritual ceremony is the most ancient and earliest art in the life of archipelago people, especially Javanese people and people who rely on agrarian life. Agricultural societies use a basic view of life so that they have their own way of welcoming the life cycle. One of them is through sacred ceremonies in order to preserve, sustain, and save lives as well as to provide sustainable food needs for society.

According to Sujarno [9], traditional art is originated from the existence of ritual needs. Art that appears is usually analogous to certain movements, sounds, or actions in a ritual ceremony. This expression or symbol is to communicate to the Almighty or the exalted. This is in accordance with the initial function of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art which is an accompaniment in the traditional rice harvest ritual ceremony. According to the story that developed in society at that time, where they still adhered to animism and dynamism, they believed in a God who gave them life. Likewise, in agriculture, Dewi Sri is a symbol of belief which is considered the goddess of rice. The people believed that Dewi Sri would be very happy with the beautiful voice so that when the harvest arrived they always sounded *rinding* in the hope that Dewi Sri would be happy and willing to give blessings to the rice they were going to harvest.

However, along with the times, this *rinding gumbeng* traditional art has undergone many changes in function. For example, at this time, the *rinding gumbeng* traditional art is not only functions as a traditional ritual

ceremony but also as a society entertainment, a tourism object, and a medium of education for the people of Ngawen, Gunungkidul.

3.2.2. Society entertainment

According to Sujarno [9], the function of traditional performing arts is as a means of entertainment or spectacle. The audiences usually see the art with the aim to find entertainment, relieve stress, and relax. Traditional performing arts as a means of entertainment are usually independent performances and are not associated with carrying out ritual ceremonies. This show is held to commemorate an event or as a means of entertainment for a purpose. The change in the function of the *rinding gumbeng* traditional art as public entertainment can be seen in the present era with many activities. The factors that cause *rinding gumbeng* to change function are due to its geographical location in the highlands. As a result, the lack of entertainment that is present in this society makes *rinding gumbeng* as entertainment. Another factor is the lack of people's knowledge regarding technology advances. Many people in Ngawen have not been able to access the internet network so that this has resulted in a lack of entertainment facilities for the Ngawen society. Thus, *rinding gumbeng* traditional art is used as a reference for society entertainment. In this function, the songs that are sung are not like in traditional ritual ceremonies but are presented with more modern songs. In addition, traditional arts are presented in attractive packaging that is through communicative language for the interaction process. In accordance with this explanation, it shows that there is a change in function that is from a traditional ritual function to an entertainment function.

3.2.3. Tourism object

Another function change from *rinding gumbeng* is to become a tourist attraction. With the continued play of *rinding gumbeng* as an entertainment function, this has indirectly made the traditional arts more and more known to many people. As a result, the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* has changed its function to become a tourist attraction, both for domestic tourists and foreign tourists. The real form of the implementation of a tourism object function in *rinding gumbeng* is the number of students outside the region or foreign tourists who make study tours to learn *rinding gumbeng* traditional art. Besides, they also learned the process of making a traditional *rinding gumbeng* musical instrument. The factor that causes changes in the function of this art is due to contact with other groups, namely tourists.

3.2.4. Medium of social education

According to Sujarno [9], one of the important functions of traditional performing arts is as a medium of education. As a medium of education, this traditional performing art has a transformation of cultural values. In addition, *rinding gumbeng* as a medium of education is also shown by the existence of studios in Ngawen. Several schools also use the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* in their teaching and learning process of cultural arts subjects. The change in function from a ritual ceremony to a means of social education, in formal and informal channels, is also caused by several factors. One of them is as a reference for the younger generation to install art appreciation education, art creation, character education, a form of an effort to preserve the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng*, and regenerate livelihoods for future generations. Therefore, sustainability will be maintained considering the many young generations today who think that the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* is an ancient art that has only been studied by old people. Another thing that becomes a factor in changing the function of this art is the implementation of *rinding gumbeng* in the demands of the schools' curriculum through the subject of arts and culture. The schools' curriculum demands that the students are expected to be able to create and appreciate local traditional arts so that educators in Ngawen schools attempt to present the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* in the process of teaching and learning activities as well as in extracurricular activities at school.

4. CONCLUSION

As explained in the results and discussion, the traditional art of *rinding gumbeng* in Ngawen Gunungkidul undergone a form of functional transformation. Along with the times, art that used to function as a traditional ritual has changed to function as a society entertainment, a tourism object, and a medium of social education. The transformation of this function is caused by environmental change, the number of cultural elements that are included in society, and the changes in people's lifestyles due to modernization. As a result, there are many social agents who have new ideas in developing the Ngawen area with the aim of adapting to current developments.

The function transformation of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art is considered quite interesting since it is adjusted to the current development. However, it will be even more interesting if the function of *rinding gumbeng* traditional art as an accompaniment to the traditional rice harvest ritual is carried out by the Ngawen society so that the original identity of this area can be maintained. Moreover, it can become an effort to preserve the traditional art from generation to generation. If the traditional rituals are carried out

continuously, an idea will emerge that the function of the implementation of this traditional ritual can also function as a religious tourism object.

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