

# Local Wisdom Values of Traditional Music Performance *Tarawangsa* in the *Bubur Sura* Ritual Ceremony

Nanang Supriatna, Iwan Gunawan, Febry Cipta  
 Fakultas Pendidikan Seni Desain  
 Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia  
 Bandung, Indonesia  
 supriatna61@yahoo.com

**Abstract**—*Tarawangsa* is one type of local wisdoms in the field of music, which once had massive supporters. In every show, *Tarawangsa* is always presented to entertain both actively and passively. *Tarawangsa* is usually performed in various events, one of which is the Ritual Ceremony of *Bubur Sura*. *Tarawangsa* show in this event has a very important value for its supporters. In this study, the values of local wisdom of *Tarawangsa* performances in the ritual ceremony was studied by using ethnographic methods with a qualitative approach. By this method, it is revealed that *Tarawangsa* contains the values of beliefs of the society to Dewi Sri, private entertainment for farmers to release tired, economics for the artists, gathering place for all supporters and owners of *rurukan*, togetherness in completing all work related to performances, and aesthetic for the artist and the community.

**Keywords**—*local wisdom values; performances; Tarawangsa; Bubur Sura*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s to date, many studies have explored the values of local wisdom in certain cultures [1-5]. They essentially state that the values of local wisdom are the result of a particular society's efforts to develop humanitarian values. Through the values of local wisdom, the people who develop them seek to build the civilization needed for their lives. Therefore, it is not wrong if the values of local wisdom has become the basic needs of every society that makes it. The values of local wisdom is believed to be the need by the community of supporters because they can provide capital for their success and prosperity. Therefore, the values of local wisdom function to empower the potential of community in inheriting, developing, and building the culture and civilization towards future.

The concept of the values of local wisdom to provide the capital of success and prosperity has grown in the community that develop the knowledge in the form of messages and customs that are believed and passed down from generation to generation about how to behave towards nature [6]. This form of knowledge is naturally constructed into local values of wisdom that is internalized within each society.

Although researches on the exploration of local wisdom values around the world have been widely implemented such as in Africa, Aborigin, and others [2-5], the researches that focus on *Tarawangsa* music has not implemented widely. Based on 2015 research, Sundanese people in Sumedang have the values of local wisdom that have been awakened for centuries on their attitude towards nature. Based on the wisdom, they are very concerned about the sustainability of nature to keep the natural resources from excessive exploitation. Conservation of nature and their concern for nature are expressed in the *Tarawangsa* music. Therefore, in the life of the Sundanese people there, *Tarawangsa* music becomes a culture that is inseparable from the nature they inhabit. It makes their concern for the continuity of *Tarawangsa* music to be high. For them, *Tarawangsa* music is important to support ritual activities for nature preservation. This is evidenced by the persistence of *Tarawangsa*, especially in the Sumutang Village of North Sumedang. The music is a supporting medium for ritual ceremonies in order to thank for what has been given by nature to them.

## II. FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING

Understanding of local wisdom, indigenous knowledge, local knowledge, or traditional knowledge is expressed by Grenier, he reveals that the concept of local wisdom refers to local values, beliefs, rituals, traditions, and those relating to the environment that exist in indigenous or local communities [7].

Whatever the terminology, local wisdom refers to the traditional and unique knowledge that is in and developed around the specific conditions of community in a specific geographic area. Based on these references, the understanding of the values of local wisdom as intended in this research is the knowledge devices possessed by certain communities (customs, families, communities, etc.) as concepts created for use in sustaining their daily lives.

According to WIPO, the values of local wisdom or traditional knowledge are a broad subject matter to be described. In general, the values of local wisdom incorporate the concept of local cultural heritage, practice, and knowledge systems (customs). In other words, the values of local wisdom

generally include the expressed content of the knowledge itself, including special signs and symbols associated with the values of local wisdom [8].

### III. METHOD

In this study, the values of local wisdom of *Tarawangsa* performances in the ritual ceremony was studied by using ethnographic methods with a qualitative approach.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on observations made on *Tarawangsa* performances in the ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura*, the show has a very important role in the life of the community. The importance of the traditional music for them is inseparable from the values contained in it. These values are the values of local wisdom that are related to the survival of each member of their community. Based on the results of the research, the values of local wisdom contained in the traditional music are, among others, as follows.

#### A. Community Trust Value

Based on a review on several related research results, at first *Tarawangsa* is only shown in the ceremony of *Bubur Sura*, which is usually held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month of Muharram/Sura every year. Based on the presentation of special songs in the ritual, they all are associated with Dewi Sri (literally means Goddess Sri). The people of Kampung Kupa calls her *Kersa Nyai/Nu Geulis*. The ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura* is intended as an offering ceremony to Dewi Sri/*Kersa Nyai* on the harvest that has been obtained by the people of that area. Therefore, the position of *Tarawangsa* in the ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura* cannot be replaced with another art/music [8].

Based on the above explanation, it can be assumed, that the ceremony of ritual ceremony *Sura* and traditional music of *Tarawangsa* are in a unity that cannot be separated. This means that *Tarawangsa* has a very vital role in the activities of the ritual ceremony. As a musical art, the role or function played by *Tarawangsa* can be observed from the songs that are presented specifically in ritual ceremonies, such as songs of *saur*, *pangapungan/Pangameut/pangemat*, *pamapag*, *Panimang*, *Icikibung*, and *Bangbalikan*. All songs are presented in instrumental form that is played only by two instruments (*waditra*): *ngek-ngek* and *jentreng*. Another thing to reveal, the songs are only played for the purposes of the ritual ceremony, not for other purposes. In addition, the songs of *Tarawangsa* are contained only in the terms of *Tarawangsa* music, which is why the songs can only be played in *Tarawangsa*. The songs presented in ritual ceremonies, according to Sasaki, are called 'main songs'. In detail, the meaning contained in the song are as follows [9].

#### B. Entertainment Value

The *Tarawangsa* performance in the ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura* is performed twice, i.e. the night before making the porridge and during the day of making the porridge. The evening show is not only meant for the ceremony to present Dewi Sri, but also to provide entertainment for the people in

attendance. It is not strange if the members of the public who attend are those who intend to do entertainment. They danced in turns both women and men until their desire to do entertainment was met. They are not only given the freedom to dance much, but also perform various dance moves based on their own expression. Even those who feel less satisfied can repeat it during the day.

Unlike the usual songs played in the activities of ritual ceremonies, the songs for ritual ceremonies can only be played once, while the songs on this entertainment show may be played repeatedly. The number of songs that are usually played for public entertainment activities are limited because the number of the songs of *Tarawangsa* is only amounted to 17 songs. Therefore, also in Kampung Kupa the term *Tarawangsa* is commonly referred with *sasaka tujuh belas* (literally means 'seventeen songs'). Songs that are included in the category of entertainment songs or free songs are *angin-angin*, *guar bumi*, *pangairan*, *pancawarna*, *dengdo*, *degung*, *buncis*, *ayun-ambing*, *pasawah*, *limbangan*, *bangun*, and *sirmagalih* [10]. In performing this entertainment, most of the members of the community dance to the trance.

#### C. Livelihood Value

For the music players, *Tarawangsa* has a different function compared to the participant and the perpetrators of the ceremony. For the perpetrators of the ceremony and its participant, *Tarawangsa* has a function as a medium of ceremony and entertainment respectively. For the music players, *Tarawangsa* serve as one of the important livelihood to support their families.

#### D. Gratitude Value

*Tarawangsa* performances both at the ceremony ritual *Bubur Sura* and other events is organized by the community and is always attended by members of the community who become the audiences. The audiences present in the show usually have a different diversity, ranging from young to elderly, women and men, some with a home that are very close to the venue and some others are far away. The most important is that of all who presents, not all of them know each other. Their presence to watch the *Tarawangsa* show hosted by one of the members of the community has different reasons. Some people attend the *Tarawangsa* because of their involvement in ritual ceremonies, either as *saehu*, music players, and as ceremony participants. Some others attend it because they are asked to assist the performance of the show. In other hand, some other present for the reason of the relationship, not only with the family performing the show but also with everyone present at the venue. As one visitor pointed out, "I am here not to participate in *ngabubur* ceremony because I do not understand about it, not to dance because I cannot do it, but I attend because we respect each other as neighbors, friends, and relatives, where we often visit each other. Another reason that my presence is solely for the conduct of the relationship not only with families who have intent, but also with all who are present in this place. I am confident that this will bring good gifts to me as well as to the society in general." (Amir, interviewed in September 2017).

### E. Togetherness Value

In *Tarawangsa* performance of *Sura*, the people who attend are also not only to participate actively in the ceremony and want to do entertainment by dancing accompanied by *Tarawangsa*. Many of them also aim to provide assistance, either as cooks, equipment provider for making porridge, cleaning up dirty stuff, and so forth. People whose intentions to help with this selfless activity are numerous. When others do the entertainment, they still do their work and take no part in the show at the ceremonial arena. Their goal is to help alleviate the burden of community members performing the ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura*, by working together for whatever work to be completed.

### F. Esthetic Value

For the artists of *Tarawangsa*, this art cannot only be used as a medium of livelihood, but there is also another thing that is not less important, namely as a medium of esthetic expression. For all music players of *Tarawangsa*, this aesthetic expression function has a very important role to present the expected performance quality. A player can embellish the play of an instrument, such as using ornamentation, developing basic melodies, tempos, and developing instrumental techniques. All of them will produce good quality performances, when the players have a good esthetic expression as well.

### G. Symbolic Value

*Tarawangsa* traditional musical performances, especially in the ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura*, contain certain symbols for their audience. The symbolic value of the *Tarawangsa* show is not only in the offering contents (Sundanese: *sasajen*), but also the songs played by the artists. In this case, some of the 'principal' songs that have a symbolic value are *saur* as the symbol of the opening ceremony; *Pangameut* as the symbol of the mantra capable of presenting *Kersa Nyai*; *pamapag* as the symbol that *Kersa Nyai* is at the ceremony; the *Panimang* as the symbol that *Kersa Nyai* is walking from inside the cave to the place of ceremony; and the reverse is a symbol that *Kersa Nyai* is returning to her original place (*goah*).

## V. CONCLUSION

As a traditional music that develops from generation to generation, *Tarawangsa* is not only important because the musical elements are favored by the supporters, but behind the show there are various values that are very important for the survival of the supporting community. For the community, *Tarawangsa* has the value of trust, entertainment, economy, friendship, togetherness, symbolic, and esthetic. These values will be able to empower the potential of the supporting community to bequeath, develop, and build the future culture and civilization. From the value of local wisdom contained in the *Tarawangsa* show, the community is very concerned about the sustainability of nature, to keep the natural resources from excessive exploitation. Conservation of nature and their concern for nature are expressed through the music that is performed at the ritual ceremony of *Bubur Sura*.

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