



CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE PRESENTATION OF SIKAMBANG ARTS IN THE SOCIETY OF SIBOLGA CITY

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Abstract

This study is entitled Continuity and Changes in the Presentation of Sikambang Art in the Community of Sibolga City. In this study, qualitative methods are used as a reference in conducting research. This research took place on Jalan Sisinga Mangaraja XII, Sibolga City. The purpose of this study was to determine the continuity and changes that occurred in the period before independence, after independence and the New Order era until now. In this study, researchers apply the theory of cultural change according to Herskovitz; cultural change can be seen from two points of view, namely, what happened in the past and the present. Based on the first point of view, they always use it in the term diffusion, which is defined as the transmission of culture in the process. The results achieved in this study are the dynamics of change in a period of 3 periods wherein the pre-independence stage, Sikambang art was still very simple, only played with Sikambang drums, and then in the post-independence phase, Sikambang art progressed with the addition of several instruments in its presentation. Then in the New Order phase, Sikambang art began to be eroded by the entry of new cultures, which caused a lack of interest in the new generation in maintaining Sikambang art. This can be seen from the loss of several songs in the Sikambang arts.

Key words: *Continuity, Sikambang, Sibolga*

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INTRODUCTION

Art is a work of human art that expresses beauty and is an expression of the soul and culture of its creator. Art is part of culture and a means used to express a sense of beauty from within the human soul; its beauty also has other functions. The variety of arts that exist includes music, fine arts, theatre, literature and dance. The manifestation of art in society is a reflection of the personality of the community's life. Art is always attached to human life; where there are humans in it, there must be art. From this statement it is true that art has existed since humans appeared. In essence, art is the fruit of human intelligence in expressing the values of beauty and nobility through various media of art branches". Then there is also an opinion from Suwandono (1984:40), who said that:

Art, in this case dance art, belongs to the community so that its expression is a reflection of the mind and life order of the region itself. The high and low civilisation of a nation can be seen from the culture or art it has; therefore, art, as one part of culture, needs to be preserved and developed. This explanation proves that art is very closely related to humans. Art arises because of the existence of society itself so that art can describe a condition of its society. With the existence of art, it can express the values of life that exist in society. These values must be preserved as a form of concern for art.

A work of art is certainly identical to its beauty and uniqueness. Art is a gift from God to humans to be able to express themselves as a manifestation of human civilisation as a result of directing the abilities of reason, body, feelings, emotions, desires and five senses, which are displayed in the result of works that can be enjoyed, both by the artist (the creator of the work) and by others who aim to expand, beautify and create harmony of soul, body, mind and nature. Thus it can be said that art is everything that aims to refine and beautify the soul and nature. Works of art are the result of human efforts in creating something beautiful that has a certain value. Saini (2001:49) stated that:

A work of art is the result of an artist's approach to reality. It is the result of the intersection or even struggle of the artist's consciousness in the form of thoughts, feelings, and imagination of the artist with the reality that is the target of his obsession.

Art is influenced by internal and external factors. Internal factors are

influenced by the learning process and habits of experience experienced by each individual. External factors are influenced by the environment or geographical location. In general, art can strengthen the bonds of solidarity of a society, because with the bonds of solidarity of a society, little by little the uniqueness of art that exists in its society is formed. This is as expressed by Sedyawati (1986, p. 61): "Art, as one of the cultural activities of society in its life, is determined by the supporting society."

The word "culture" comes from the Sanskrit word "buddayah", which is the plural form of "buddhi", which means "mind" or "reason". Thus, culture can be interpreted as "things related to reason". There are other scholars who examine the word "culture" as a development of the compound word "budi-daya", which means "power and mind".

In the context of culture, art is an important and inseparable part of human culture. In fact, in the view of the general public, it is not uncommon for people to interpret and identify culture as art. Art in the context of culture is an expression of creativity from culture itself. It creates and provides opportunities to move, maintains, transmits, develops and then recreates a new culture. Art is one of the needs of human life in the form of fulfilling the need for a sense of beauty. In the context of society, certain types of art have certain supporting groups. Likewise, art can have different functions in different human groups. Changes in function and changes in form in works of art; thus, it can also be caused by the dynamics of society. On the other hand, the social order and its changes also determine the direction of the development of art. Zamroni said that culture is a view of life recognised by a group of people that includes ways of thinking, behaviour, attitudes, and values that are reflected in both physical and abstract forms.

The development of the era has two impacts on the existence of traditional arts. On the one hand, advances in science and technology have a positive impact on the existence of traditional arts. Starting from the addition of various kinds of art performance equipment that can make people not get bored of seeing it. As for the negative impact, various types of traditional arts that were once "glorious", along with the increasingly rapid flow of foreign culture and art, the existence of traditional arts is also threatened. Central Tapanuli has a variety of

traditional arts spread across various regions, but of the many arts, many are still less known. This is due to several factors, including the absence of successors, lack of interest in the art, and the development of the era that makes people prefer new arts.

Music as a universal language can connect humans to humans, humans to nature, and humans to the creator of the universe, namely God Almighty. Music is a work of art that comes from creative ideas, where ideas are something that can be felt, thought, and experienced and something that can shake the soul as a potential. Music as a means of communication is very important for human life because it can provide a positive effect on human life.

In detail from an ethnomusicological perspective, Alan P. Merriam said that the function of music in a society is related to the various social and cultural contexts in which the music grows and develops. Among them are: (1) as a means of emotional expression, (2) as an aesthetic pleasure, (3) as entertainment at various levels of society, (4) as a communication function, (5) as a symbolic representation, (6) as a means of physical response, (7) as a reinforcement of social norm conformity, (8) as a contribution to cultural continuity and stability, (9) as a support for social integration, and (10) as a validation of religious ceremonies.

Kosashi (1994:418) stated that "music is a place where humans pour out their feelings, a place to describe the vibrations of the imaginary soul that arise in the mind which cannot be expressed through words, actions or other fields of art." Thus, it can be said that music in the form of elements of melody, rhythm, timbre, harmony, and texture will also be faced again with the variety of people's lives, and specifically, music will collaborate with other arts. In the performing arts, the role of music is very dominant. This can be seen in every performance of the performing arts.

Therefore, many artists or cultural researchers never stop talking about music. There are many pros and cons when talking about music. In modern times, music has developed very widely. Many creative ideas are given by artists to make music more colourful. From the description above, it can be concluded that culture is the scope of all ideas produced by humans from their

experiences, namely knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, habits and abilities, and their behaviour in community life. Culture consists of everything learnt from normative behavioural patterns, which includes all ways or patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. On this occasion, the researcher focuses on raising the culture of the Pesisir Sibolga community, North Sumatra, namely Sikambang art. The Pesisir Sibolga community has an art called Sikambang. Sikambang art is a container of art that contains elements of dance, music, and literature. Where in its presentation it is displayed simultaneously. Sikambang art is very sacred in the wedding ceremonies of the Pesisir tribe; it is a must for Sikambang art to always be played at the wedding ceremonies of the Pesisir community.

Sikambang itself consists of the words 'Si' and 'Kambang', which mean one type of music in the coastal community. Sikambang art is very sacred in the traditional wedding ceremonies of the coastal tribe; it is a must for Sikambang art to always be played at traditional wedding ceremonies. Sikambang art includes several elements of art, namely: (1) music, (2) dance, and (3) singers or chanters. Sikambang art has several music and dances that have been paired and cannot be changed. Sikambang art is performed at every traditional wedding of the coastal community.

The following is music and dance in Sikambang art: (1) Kapri song paired with saputangan dance, (2) Kapulo pinang song paired with payung dance, (3) Duo song paired with selendang dance, (4) Sikambang song paired with anak dance. Each of the songs and dances in Sikambang art has advice for young people who are going to get married.

The presence of Sikambang art at various wedding events shows a sense of ownership of the art so that the art becomes a shared property and is in many ethnic groups, even though from the outside they look different. Through the Sikambang art used at weddings, it shows how the people of the Sibolga Coast relate to each other. This can be called a community identity of "Sibolga-ness", which makes each ethnic group feel like they are part of the Sibolga community. Sikambang art has grown and developed in Central Tapanuli with various characteristics, of

course inseparable from the customs and habits found in Central Tapanuli. Sikambang art is often held in important activities in the Pesisir community. Such as at certain events, for example, weddings, circumcision parties or circumcisions of the apostles, welcoming guest parties, turun karai (turun tanah) parties, swinging and naming children, occupying or entering a new house, art performances or performances, and celebrations of big days. Sikambang art is also a part of people's lives that functions as a medium of communication in conveying certain messages through advice rhymes, such as harmony in society and harmony in marriage. Sikambang art, as a dynamic culture, over time has experienced changes both in its use, where at this time, along with the development of the times, the people of the Sibolga Coast no longer view Sikambang art as a sacred or ritual culture; now some people consider Sikambang art to be a culture that can be used in a performance or entertainment. Seeing this phenomenon, researchers are interested in studying and exploring the art of Sikambang Pesisir Sibolga.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher uses a qualitative method to understand the problems found in the scientific study of the continuity and changes in Sikambang Sibolga art. This study will cover various things, starting from the preparation stage before the field, the fieldworkstage, data collection, data analysis and report writing.

In obtaining data or information in the field, stages such as description, reduction, and selection must go through which will be carried out repeatedly to achieve concrete data from several references related to the topic of discussion. To study the Saputangan dance on the night before the wedding of the Sibolga Coastal community, the researcher used a qualitative research method, in accordance with what was stated by Miller (1990: 3), who said, "Qualitative research is a particular tradition in social science that fundamentally depends on human observations in their own area and relates to people in their language and terminology."

Qualitative research can be divided into four stages, namely:

1. Stage before going to the field.
2. Fieldwork.
3. Data analysis.
4. Writing the report

At the stage before going to the field, the researcher prepares all kinds of needs for conducting the research later. At this stage, a lot of preparation needs to be done before going to the field and designing all the needs later. Before going to the field, the researcher must understand the research area and be able to choose informants well.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Continuity of Sikambang Art in the Coastal Community Culture of Sibolga City.

Continuity is a situation that is expected in determining the attitude to determine "something" can live, supported by the actions of the community who want it to continue. However, the sustainability of "something" depends on the history and environmental background that will determine it.

a. Sikambang Art in the Pre-Independence Period

Based on historical findings found in Lobu Tua, a tombstone written in Arabic and the Papan Tinggi Tomb and Mahligai Tomb found in Barus. From these historical findings, it is very clear that the development of culture on the West Coast of Tapanuli is influenced by Islam.

According to Sjawal Pasaribu 2011, Customs and Culture of the Coastal Community of Central Tapanuli/Sibolga, the history of Sikambang art was initially always used by the coastal community at traditional events, wedding ceremonies, circumcision ceremonies of the apostle (circumcision), turun karai (going down to the ground), and entering a new house. This is still partly ongoing to this day. Although it seems to be very limited to certain moments.

According to the book by Arda Dinata et al. on the art and dance of Sikambang, in the West Tapanuli Coastal community, a culture called Sikambang grew and developed. The Sikambang culture that exists and develops on the West Tapanuli Coast, especially in two areas of North Sumatra, namely Sibolga City and Central Tapanuli Regency, is an original coastal culture. Sikambang art was created by

the coastal community by adapting to the nature of the West Tapanuli Coast, which has beaches and waves.

Nurdin Ahmad (interview July 31, 2022) stated that the Coastal Sikambang Art in Sibolga City was first born in the 16th century, and Sikambang music emerged vocally starting from the sailing of a sailor, who recited pantun verses by hitting the planks of his boat as his musical instrument, and here it began to be known as Sikambang vocally. The results of Mr Nurdin Ahmad's interview with Drs Adi Budin Pasaribu, one of the cultural figures in Barus and a cleric and judge of Sultan Ibrahim Syah Raja Barus Hilir, said that the origin of Sikambang art originally came from Badiki. Badiki is singing sholawat using a drum-like musical instrument. Furthermore, it was developed by the fishing community, who were already familiar with the Sikambang song, so that in its further development, Sikambang became one of the arts in the Sibolga Coastal community. On the other hand, according to the Central Tapanuli Coastal community of Sibolga, the term Sikambang has several meanings, namely the name of one type of musical instrument in the Coastal community, namely the Sikambang drum. The name of the repertoire is Sikambang and Sikambang Botan; the name of one type of performance in the coastal community is BaSikambang; the term for a familiar song or songs is the Sikambang song (Nainggolan, 2012). Sikambang art is a combination of arts in it, namely musical ensembles, dances, talibun chants, and silek waves duo baleh. Sikambang songs in the form of pantun and verses are usually performed by one or two anak alek (Sikambang musicians). The form of the verses in pantun is fixed and is continuously repeated, voiced by anak alek (Sikambang musicians), and usually each song is paired with a dance. Sikambang art includes instrumental music, dance, vocals, and the martial art of pencak silat (Nainggolan, 2012).

Sikambang art began with a fisherman who was at sea around the Mursalah Islands. Suddenly, he heard the strains of a song that touched his feelings, so the fisherman fell silent to listen to the song which was finally carried to the mainland of Jago-Jago Village. The fisherman sang again the strains of the song he had just heard while at sea on Mursalah Island, and then the other

neighbours heard the song and asked the fisherman who was singing the strains of the song directly. "What song, and who is the singer?" Then, the fisherman said that when he was at sea on Mursalah Island, he heard the song there, but he did not know who the singer was. So the next day the fisherman tried to find the source of the sound of the song he heard while at sea; it turned out that the sound he heard while at sea was the voice of a princess who was putting her baby to sleep. After meeting the fisherman's daughter, he asked what song she was singing and who the singer was. The princess replied that she did not know either because she was also carried from Bengkulu in a chest and stranded on the coast (Mursalah) and heard the song from a young man who was singing from the bottom of his sad heart. The young man's name was Kambang, and then the princess repeated the song from the young man.

At the beginning of its presentation, Sikambang art was only played with simple instruments such as the wooden edge of a boat that was hit, then over time the Pesisir community made a Sikambang drum musical instrument which was used as a tempo regulator in singing Sikambang songs.

At the beginning of Sikambang art, there were 8 songs and dances, namely the Kapri song with saputangan dance, the kapulo pinang song with payung dance, the duo song with selendang dance, the sikambang botan song with Pedang dance, the perak-perak song with Kipas dance, the simatibunuh song with Pahlawan dance, the adok song with Adok dance, and the sikambang song with Anak dance.

b. Sikambang Art in the Post-Independence Period

In the post-independence phase, Sikambang art experienced changes in its presentation, which was initially only played with the accompaniment of Sikambang drums and now has several additional new instruments, such as singkadu and violins, that add new nuances to Sikambang art. Sikambang art becomes an art that must be performed when the traditional wedding ceremony of the coastal community is going to take place, namely on the night before the wedding ceremony.

c. Sikambang Art from the New Order Period to the Present

In this era, Sikambang art experienced several additional instruments, namely the accordion andion and carano. The existence of cultural contact that occurred in its development made the Sikambang art experience changes. Sikambang art is the main coastal art of Sibolga City. In the traditional wedding ceremony of the Sibolga coast, this Sikambang art is very related because there is a traditional ceremony that is carried out before carrying out the marriage profession, as well as advice for the bride and groom (couple). The Sikambang art on the coast of Sibolga City itself is starting to be threatened with extinction or has become rare, but it still exists today. Here is an interview with the researcher with the coastal community of Sibolga about the Sikambang art. Until now, there are only 4 songs and dances in the Sikambang art, namely, the kapri song with the saputangan dance, the kapulo pinang song with the payung dance, the duo song with the selendang dance, and the Sikambang song with the anak dance.

In the researcher's interview with the resource person (Mr Syariman Irawadi Hutajulu) as a practitioner and cultural figure in the coastal culture, the resource person never heard the Sikambang botan song with the sword dance, the Perak-perak song with the kipas dance, the Simatibunuh song with the Pahlawan dance, or the Adok song with the Adok dance that was played, and currently no one knows exactly what the rhythm or melody is that is sung in these songs. The distance and lack of public awareness are the main factors that have caused the disappearance of these songs,, and until now,, they have only become stories.

The factors that cause Sikambang art to decline,, according to Mr Syahrman, are the lack of love from the Sibolga Coastal community for the art they have. According to the source,, Syafrwal Marbun (interview, November 23, 2024) stated that there are several factors that cause Sikambang art to be almost threatened with extinction in the Sibolga coastal community, namely: the absence of regeneration in this Sikambang art is one of the causes of the almost extinction and lack of development of Sikambang art on the coast of Sibolga City. There is an element

of social jealousy that occurs between the oldest Sikambang artists and young artists,, which results in an element of fear of losing their livelihoods. As we know,, in general,, young artists are more developed in their expertise and are more skilled in art, especially the coastal Sikambang art of Sibolga City; therefore,, the oldest artists are reluctant to teach basic knowledge about the coastal Sikambang art of Sibolga and how to play it themselves. The high price of Sikambang art services is also one of the causes of the near extinction of Sikambang art; the cost of Sikambang art services is set at a price ranging from seven million rupiah to ten million rupiah. Most of the coastal livelihoods of Sibolga City itself are fishermen, farmers, traders, civil servants, ABRI, labourers, craftsmen, and pedicab drivers. In accordance with the coastal nature,, of course,, most of the livelihoods of the coastal population of Sibolga are as fishermen. That way we know that the income groups of the Sibolga community are families from the middle to lower.

With the benchmark cost of Sikambang art ranging from seven million to ten million rupiah, it makes the people of Sibolga reconsider it. A wedding certainly requires a lot of money, so the people of Sibolga put aside the traditional customs of Sikambang art at the wedding ceremony and prefer ordinary entertainment and adjust the price. The artists of Sikambang on the coast of Sibolga also use Sikambang art as a source of income; the lack of a spirit of preserving their own culture that occurs with Sikambang artists has made this Sikambang art not develop.

The difficulty of finding a Sikambang art studio is the cause of the near extinction of Sikambang art; the Sikambang art studio used to be active, but due to several factors, the Sikambang art studio began to stop operating. The absence of operational costs for the Sikambang Art studio in Sibolga makes people in it reluctant to participate. The Department of Culture also participates in the preservation of Sibolga coastal art culture, but most precisely the wrong target or not with the right person.

The people of Sibolga who want to use the services of Sikambang Art do not know where to ask if they want to use the services of Sikambang Art. Initially, they wanted to use

the services of Sikambang Art, but it did not happen due to the lack of relationships of an individual. The location that does not support it is also one of the causes of the near extinction of the art of Sikambang Pesisir Sibolga City, because the location of the Sibolga residents' settlements is very narrow and does not have a large settlement area, making Sikambang art very difficult to perform. This Sikambang art performance also features a dance that is a consideration for the people of Sibolga to perform Sikambang art with a complete composition so that the people of Sibolga who use the services of Sikambang art only use the services of the Sikambang music ensemble and talibun singing without using dance so that the customs of the Sibolga coastal wedding ceremony are conveyed.

CONCLUSION

In this conclusion, the researcher sees that the development of Sikambang art has experienced a decline in its existence. Lack of awareness and love for one's own culture are the main factors causing the decline in Sikambang art, which initially had 8 songs and dances and now only has 4 songs and dances.

Public awareness is an important factor in preserving and maintaining Sikambang art to continue to exist; it is hoped that there will be a new generation that will participate in maintaining Sikambang art. The intervention of the government is also very helpful in maintaining the sustainability of Sikambang art by holding performances and providing a forum for Sikambang artists to continue to exist in their work. Utilising social media to introduce Sikambang art, it is hoped that by frequently sharing Sikambang art activities, it can help to maintain Sikambang art to continue to exist and be known by the wider community.

Loving traditional customs and culture should actually be instilled from an early age, and it is never too late because the Sikambang art still exists among the coastal communities of Sibolga; the Sikambang artists are still active today, even though the population of Sikambang art performers is not that large.

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