**Dadung Feast Rite As A Cultural Expression in Legok Herang Village, Kuningan District**

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**ABSTRACT**

This research aims to examine the tradition of the Dadung Party in Legokherang village, Kuningan Regency, West Java. A tradition that expresses gratitude to God for the harvest and the entity maintaining the relationship between living creatures and nature. The research method used is qualitative with a dance anthropology approach which is elaborated with choreographic concepts. This research shows that the Dadung Party is an integral part of community life and has been passed down from generation to generation. It also has connections to the Islamic beliefs propagated by the Wali Songo. This ritual involves various stages, such as worship, Rajah Pamunah, and entertainment and ritual equipment that must be adhered to by community participants. This tradition is a preserved cultural heritage and functions as a balance to modern culture. The noble philosophical values contained in the dance at the Dadung Party although this dance does not have fixed movements, the emphasis on expression as a manifestation of feelings is very important. Local cultural continuity is a dynamic part of society, and external cultural influences must be adapted to the worldview and local culture.

**Keywords**: Dadung Party, Hajat Bumi, Seren Taun, Dance Anthropogy, Legokherang, Kuningan

**INTRODUCTION**

Culture as identity is a form of expression and a whole set of ideas built on the basis of institutions that make society a social creature (Halid, 2022). Plural cultures always give rise to customs, which become unique for society, so that cultural differences become local and inherent identity (Suryandari, 2017). Cultural entities that are communal in nature are the result of works of art that are recursively maintained, these works are part of a regime that revolving within the foundations of society (Kusuma, 2022).

The communal work which is the identity of its wealth also refers to the community groups living in the Legokherang area, Kuningan Regency, West Java. The dances in the Dadung Party as a traditional cultural product are part of preservation efforts as a work of community communal identity. Based on the symptoms that appear on the surface, the decline of the arts can be addressed together as a form of mutual cooperation so that the progress and development of community culture can be in line (Suketri, 2023). Facilitating and providing a place for traditional arts in the onslaught of modernization has an impact on the survival of local cultural values as a valuable heritage that must be maintained and preserved as a cultural work entity (Fauzan, 2017). By preserving traditional art, these efforts can also be realized in every institution at the dadung party ceremony.
Traditional art practices that persist in society are a form of continuity of cultural works passed down from generation to generation (Fikriyah, 2023). Around the 18th century, the village of Legokherang was led by the village head, Kuwu, which was the identity of the village leader who had a role in empowering the community (Setiawan, 2021). Village history has recorded that the role of Kuwu was initiated by Suradipa as the seventh descendant who served in the years 1820-1850 in Legokherang village, from the descendants of Kuwu Angkin Jiwa Laksana which was inherited by the descendants of Gunung Jawa Ciwaru (Daris, in Legokherang sub-district records, was permitted to be quoted on November 28, 2022). These heirs continue to carry out the traditional practices of their ancestors, one of the traditions inherited from Sundanese ancestors which is still carried out in Legokherang Kuningan village to this day is the Dadung Party or Ombyok Dadung.

This tradition is a cultural work that contains community ritual institutions to maintain the balance between nature and humans, entities of gratitude and ceremonies for removing pests from rice plants so that crops and livestock receive abundant and blessings (Subiantoro, 2017; Hasybullah, 2019; Indratno, 2020; Adisaputri, 2022; Rohaedi, 2023). The essence of community rituals contained in the Dadung Party ceremony is part of the collective integrity of the community which aims to maintain the values of mutual cooperation.

The Dadung Party is held as a form of gratitude and aims to be a fertility rite for agriculture and livestock. Ceremonies and rituals are carried out in the morning once a year to welcome the rainy season and give thanks after the harvest is reaped (Royani, 2017). This typology developed among farming communities in the Sunda region as communities who believe in Ratu Galuh (Aulia, 2021). The local community’s belief in Ratu Galuh as the protector of animals and who is also believed to be the queen of the inner herdsmen, is closely related to the typology of society which builds a search system as cultivators (Darajat, 2021). Dadung is used as a rope that is tied around the necks of livestock and also as props in the Dadung Party dance and as a symbol which aims to ignite the enthusiasm of free-range slaves in activities in the fields (Nuryaman, 2018). The sacredness of Dadung has become an immanent part of Sundanese society (Fatimah, 2019). This aims to maintain a balance between the macro and micro cosmos regarding human life and nature.

Researching the rituals in the Dadung Party ceremony which are still maintained by the community as collective cultural integrity, this has become an affinity and awareness to continue to know more deeply about the recursive rituals involved in society which contain local values, which is an embodiment of building togetherness and cohesiveness (Brata, 2016; Hidayat, 2021). Evidence which digged up in Legokherang village, Kuningan district, West Java, to the form of institutions in the Dadung Party ritual, becomes an entity that builds cultural elements and becomes a strong foundation for the continuity of cultural work in the era of globalization.

METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods, to collect evidence in more depth on the object as a totality. Pertti Alasuutari in the book Researching Culture: Qualitative Method and Culture Studies (Alasuutari, 1995) states that qualitative analysis encourages factual evidence findings which must be explained by researchers and then interpreted (Soedarsono, 1999, p. 34). This is absolutely necessary in research on the Dadung Party in Legokherang Village. The
dance anthropology approach emphasizes multi-layered art research, information that is examined directly with the aim of obtaining evidence regarding the validity of data in the field (Meilina, 2022).

The scientific discipline that can be elaborated on in this research is the choreographic approach, this is used to look at the composition, structure and content of the dances used in the Dadung party in Legokherang Village (Shaesa, 2021). The research stage began with interviews with resource persons, followed by studying cultural works as a form of expression in the Dadung Party ritual directly. Next, documentation is carried out in the form of photos and videos. This part is the researcher’s experience as a participant observer who is directly involved in the research. The research was carried out in two stages, namely the initial stage in February and the second stage in October 2023. The research evidence obtained was then processed and combined with the results of relevant literature studies from books, journals and the internet.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The continuation of the Tradition of Dadung Party is a form of achievement that must be carried out by the traditional apparatus pioneered by Kuwu, so that traditional cultural works become part of community life that can continue dynamically in the social environment (Ajim, 2023). The tradition of the Dadung Party has been continued for generations and has become one of the arts and culture icons of Kuningan Regency.

The Dadung feast is a tradition of budak angon, which means the actions of livestock herders, the grazing carried out by these teenagers is a symbol of the continuity of this leadership and tradition (Hanifa, 2019; Nurhuda, 2023). The tradition, which became known around 1818, was transmitted by Kuwu Angkin Jiwa Laksana in the form of Kaulinan barudak (a game for teenagers) so that they could use their free time in shepherding. Angkin also presented a set of gamelan salendro, gamelan pelog Cirebon and property Dadung/tambang (Interview with H. Dahlan, October 27, 2023).

The manifestation of the institutions that are embodied in the Kaulinan budak angon is an entity of gratitude for the local village residents, the majority of whom earn their livelihood from the agricultural sector and a form of appreciation for the cattle and buffalo that have worked to help cultivate the fields and provide manure for the farmers.

Dadung, which is made from hibiscus bark fiber has the function to tie buffalo or cows and is also used as props in the Dadung Party rites. The 9 meters length is a manifestation of the village apparatus which consists of 9 people. The Jalak Pengkor dance repertoire is a dance that is also performed in this rite and this dance is a form of creativity from Angkin Jiwa Laksana. The gamelan music that accompanies the singing of kangsreng and waledan was created by Sunan Gunung Djati as Wali Songo at that time. The fusion of beliefs in the traditional rites of the Dadung Party truly has a vision in its development, preserving agricultural traditions and the values of spreading Islam. The arts and culture rites that are widely used by Wali Songo are a form of approach so that the beliefs that are spread can be integrated into the institutions of society (Putriana, 2021).

The Dadung Party is always held once a year during the katiga (dry) period before the rainy season. As time progressed, the Dadung Party was changed to August 18, which was combined with the celebration of the Independence Day. The Dadung Party rite which was carried out at the village hall was initially accompanied by
gamelan renteng and then replaced with dogdog, this instrument is a set of sounds that symbolizes gratitude for the harvest (Nastiti, 2020). then ended with the use of gamelan pelog or salendro during the Wali Songo era. This ceremony has several stages, namely: worship service, Rajah Pamunah, (Tulak Allah or Qulhu Sungsang), and entertainment, namely tayuban. The service ceremony enshrines Dadung, and begins if all the requirements have been met, including: collecting Dadung sepuh or Dadung heirloom, namely the largest Dadung (sacred Dadung) as well as Dadung for shepherds as well as offerings consisting of parawanten, rurujakan and market snacks (Interview with H. Dahlan, October 28, 2023).

At the Dadung Party event, there are several things that need to be paid attention to by all participants and the public who want to see this event. As in the following table:

<table>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Num Provisions of the day and animals</td>
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<td>Provision of tools and ritual equipment</td>
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<td>The traditional Hajat Bumi Dadung party is held only on Saturday Pahing and The traditional Hajat Bumi day of the Dadung party is held only on Saturday pahing and the Dadung party on Sunday puhun.</td>
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<td>All participants and the community were dressed in traditional clothes or adapted to Sundanese traditional clothing. All participants and the community are dressed in traditional Sundanese clothing, preferably the traditional Sundanese buhun equipped with free-r equipment.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The only animals used in the ritual are buffalo and chicken</td>
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<td>the clothing of specially invited guests or regional officials conforms to traditional Sundanese clothing</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>all agricultural and livestock equipment is not used on the day of the ritual because it is being dirajah</td>
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<td>the clothes of guests from neighboring villages and other guests who are not special guests or regional officials dress modestly</td>
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Table 1. Requirements for the Day, Animals and Traditional Provisions and Ritual Equipment for the Dadung Party.

_Dadung Ritual_

When the ceremonial institutions have been completed, the ceremonial elders burn incense and recite mantras, and then Dadung is collected and placed in a large black box. In this ritual, the gamelan accompaniment must continue to be played as sacredness and a condition for accompanying the ceremony. The incense is billowed and the mantra is recited:

_Allah kaula pangampura_  
_Parukuyan rat gumilang_  
_Aseupna si kendi wulang_  
_Ka gigir ka para nabi_  
_Ka handap ka ambu ka rama_  
_Nu calik tungtung_  
_di kamar_  
_Kadaharan_  
_tungtung kukus_  
_Sakedap kanu_  
_kagungan_

Figure 1. Rajah Dadung Ritual.  
(Source: Daris, 2006)
After reciting the mantra, the shepherds’ Dadungs were taken by their respective owners. Meanwhile, the sacred Dadung is placed on a tray and carried by the ronggeng while dancing. The Dadung was then given to the village head and handed over to Raksabumi to be given to the ceremonial elders. The Dadung scroll is opened, one end is held by the head of the ceremony and the other end is held by the head of the RT. The ceremony elders then chanted the Rajah pamunah hymn followed by the recitation of Allah’s tulak.

After that, Dadung is then danced by the village head accompanied by village officials and ronggeng accompanied by the song “Ayang Ayang Gung”. Once finished, Dadung is then put back in and the event continues with tayuban. The dancers were shepherds and local people who attended the ceremony, all of whom danced until the morning and ended at around 04.00 in the morning. All the institutions contained in this dance are the embodiment of humans as social creatures, who interact with each other, work together and maintain the values of mutual cooperation (Winarni, 2012, p. 45; Chaedar, 2022).

**Dadung Party in Legokherang Village**

The Dadung Party was initially held by only one community, but since Legokherang became Padage Village around 1843, this cultural work has continued and emerged as a tradition attached to Legokherang village until now (Interview with Daris, October 28, 2023).

**Continuity of the Dadung Party in Legokherang**

Legokherang is a form of communal tradition passed down from generation to generation originating from the Sundanese wiwitan belief (Wulandari, 2019). As an inherited tradition, this art continues to be popularized, including the village head Hasan War’i with the nickname Eyang Kuwu Gardu who served from 1950 to 1965. Kuwu’s contribution had a positive impact on the continuity of the Dadung Party in Legokherang village.

Many arts and culture experts have researched and given significance to the fact that Dadung Party does not mean excitement or euphoria but rather an entity of gratitude for all His grace and gifts. Meanwhile, as we all know, Dadung is a binding tool, if everything wants to be strong and united then it uses a binding tool. Likewise, the meaning of Dadung here is a binding tool for the unity and unity of the Legokherang Village community in particular, which is led by village officials. Because the length of the heirloom Dadung called Dadung Kosara was the first Dadung made by Mr. Mena to tie slaughtered buffalo, it was 9 meters long, reflecting the number of village officials at that time, which was nine people (Interview with Daris, October 28, 2023).

**Ibing as a Means of Entertainment at the Dadung Party**

The Dadung party is not only a ritual but also has elements that function as entertainment dances. This dance is intended for all budak angon who dedicate their lives to herding. So to relieve fatigue, village officials held entertainment in the form of tayub art, accompanied by laras pelog which is a social identity and ronggeng as a symbol of interaction which is an attraction for social creatures (Jatnika, 2023).
Budak angon are required to bring their shepherd’s equipment in the form of a Dadung, whip, kolotok, caping/sattuy cetok and accompanied by a dongdang (palanquin) as a place to store tumpeng rice and agricultural products. The party depicts a sense of togetherness, joy and a form of gratitude to the creator.

The community in Legokherang village, from young people to elders, took part in initiating the existence of this rite until it merged with the institutions of belief between Sundanese wiwitan and Islam (Sujati, 2019). Traditional art which continues to be maintained out of love and becomes the local integrity of the region, becomes the power to stay alive in the onslaught of modern culture. The Dadung Party, which has a noble philosophy, is an attraction, a supernatural gem. Dance and music have become symbols to embody noble values for people who have cultural works (Daris, interview on October 28, 2023). This understanding is also strengthened by Pabbajah (2020) that culture is able to survive because it can relate dialectically and dynamically so that cultural works can continue to be effective in the social environment of society.

According to Mr. Daris (interview on October 28, 2023) he revealed that the dance at the Dadung Party has no standard movements, the dance movements are natural according to the dancer’s feelings and desires. A research lecturer from ASTI Bandung once proposed that the dance movements be arranged in a structured manner, but this proposal was not approved. Basically, traditions embedded in society when it comes to philosophy are difficult to change. Mr. Daris’s view as the head of the association is that this dance does not emphasize the technical elements of choreography but rather emphasizes expression as a form of feeling. Even though the dancers express themselves with different dance movements, this argument is actually built on the basis of improvisation and abstract exploration of the body (Sari, 2023).

Dadung Party as a Balancer for Modern Culture

Mr. Daris stated that the Dadung Party is a sustainable entity and a balance to new cultures. This cultural work lived in ancient times and survives until now (Interview on date October 28, 2023). The Dadung Party is able to survive because all the groups that have emotional ties collectively continue to make the Dadung Party their cultural heritage.
This emphasis is based on the dancer’s desire and ability to express the feelings and expressions of the Dadung Party ritual. Traditional dances are usually sacred in nature and are characterized by dancers carrying Dadung while spinning in a circle. Dadung that has been tattooed has become a symbol of joy for farmers and livestock breeders whose wishes have been approved by local elders and the village government.

The survival of local culture is a dynamic part of society, the manifestation of local cultural works must be understood so that it can survive in global flows (Lubis, 2014, p. 4). For researchers, this must be able to be examined like the Wali Songo who were able to integrate into community institutions, especially in Legokherang village. This phenomenon is the same case, because every society that builds collectivity in culture, ideology must be explored so that local genius similarities merge to form a concept that refers to the attitudes and contributions of local communities as an answer and responsibility for a cultural meeting (Mulder in Ida Ayu Tresnawati, 2016). This section proves that external cultural influences are not accepted as they should be, but negotiations are carried out first so that they are in line with the way of life and culture that exists in the area.

CONCLUSION

The Dadung Party is an arts and culture tradition carried out by the people of Legokherang Village in Kuningan Regency, West Java as a form of expression of gratitude for the harvest and blessings. This ritual involves expressive dance and takes the form of agricultural and livestock fertility rituals, and is related to the Islamic beliefs spread by the Wali Songo.

The Dadung Party is held every year with certain stages, has customary provisions and ritual equipment that must be taken into account, and is part of a cultural heritage that is recursively maintained by the community supporting its culture. Even though the dance in the Dadung Party does not have standard movements, the emphasis on expression as a form of feeling is very important because this dance is organic in ritual-based performing arts. The continuity of local culture is a dynamic part of society, and the influence of external culture must be adjusted to the outlook on life and culture that exists at the level of Legokherang Kuningan.

The traditional rites in the Dadung Party become an entity of community sensitivity to preserve these cultural works both for residents at the level of brass in West Java so that they remain the nation’s cultural identity. The development of increasingly modern times is inevitable, this form of preservation has become a hope that started from Mr. Daris as Chairman of the Dadung Party Association and the Legokherang Village Dadung Party down to the smallest community institutions.

Protecting this traditional art so that children and grandchildren and native descendants of Legokherang Village can continue to experience the institutions of the Dadung Party in the midst of modernization. Research on the Dadung Party which can be carried out on an ongoing basis can also be carried out so that the existence of community cultural works can be of significant benefit to researchers and the academic world in the future.

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Ranta, 71 years old, Cilebak Village, Legok Herang District, Kuningan Regency

Surdianto, 40 years old, Village Official, Cilebak Village, Legok Herang District, Kuningan Regency

Alimudin, umur 52 years old, Cilebak Village, Legok Herang District, Kuningan Regency