

Pwahaci Myth in the Seren Taun Ritual Show In Cigugur, Kuningan District, West Java

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Abstract. This study used qualitative descriptive method, ethnographic observation and analysis of verbal data and pictorial data. It was built based on the ritual theory, and performance. The results of the study show that the Pwahaci myth has a significantly entire ritual process, which is the source of the theme of the entire process of spiritual teaching in the Seren Taun ritual. The theory/concept of ritual and performance seeks to give an understanding of the Dewi Pwahaci myth as a dominant symbol that has a multi-vocal meaning, and a positional dimension. Dewi Pwahaci is dramatized as a sacred communication that describes the spiritual awareness of Madrais teachings. On the other hand, it also describes the rites of life stage transition of Pwahaci Dance ("birth"), "adult" (marriage) in Ngararemokeun Pare (the mating rice), and death (perfection) of Seren Taun Peak Procession, namely Ngajayak, Babarit, and Tumbuk Padi (Nutu) rites.

Keywords: Positional dimension of the myth of Pwahaci, the ritual process of Seren Taun.

1 Introduction

In general, Seren Taun is an agricultural ceremony in which rice is regarded as a main object of the ceremony. The community always celebrates the event after the harvest season. Seren Taun is a breeding of Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Asri (the goddess of rice) and it has been a cultural heritage of the indigenous people in the archipelago that is influenced by Hindu teachings [1]. This ceremony has been preserved since the time of the Pajajaran Kingdom, namely the Sunda Galuh Kingdom in Tatar Pasundan, western part of the island of Java (https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kidup_Sunda). In Cigugur, the Seren Taun ritual is a celebration of joy in carrying out the customs of the Kiai Madrais's belief, held annually on 22 Rayagung (Dzulhijjah, Saka, Sunda Year). This annual event is held with the surrounding community as a homage to the Goddess Pwahaci, the goddess of the earth's essence. The title Dewi Pwahaci was chosen to be the basic concept because it has a philosophical meaning of natural cosmic teachings. The Dewi Pwahaci represents the mother of all plants (sari pwahaci), translated into aesthetic communication as the painting of awareness, an action to create a harmony between human and nature, humans and God, and among humans.

In religions, rituals have qualities of free playing through which individuals can listen to music, pray, see visual symbols, taste purified food, smell incense, and come into contact with

sacred charm [2]. The ritual also has significant elements as a sacred (holy) communication that occurs as (1) exhibition "what is shown"; (2) action "what is done"; and (3) "what instruction is said" [2]. This communication is demonstrated through aspects of the ceremonial system (a ritual), namely the existence of ideas, linguistics, ritual behaviors, and equipments or facilities for ritual performances interrelated with one another. Dewi Pwahaci's expansive dramatization in the Seren Taun ritual process has become a performance activity. As a series of actions, compiled based on customary procedures gives the spirit, in the form of praying, dancing, singing, telling past events and celebrating them.

The Seren Taun ritual process consists of four rites, namely the Damar Sewu ritual that takes the Lotus Flower, meaning the soul lighting; The Dadung Party Ritual is an aesthetic action to live up to the guidance concerning human relations with nature; The Spiritual Song of a Night Ritual is a night of prayer, in which various religions and customs and the Puncak Ngajayak, Babarit and Nutu Processions represent considerably. The Pwahaci myth shows rites that are related to the stages of life namely birth, marriage, and death. The birth stage is depicted in presenting the Pwahaci Dance, the maturity stage (marriage) at Ngararemokeun Pare, and the stage of perfection (death) in the Ngajayak Procession of the rice mash (nutu).

2 Method

This research used a descriptive qualitative method aiming to describe the properties of an individual, a certain state (a process event), a symptom or a group, and to determine the frequency of a certain relationship between a symptom and other symptoms in the society precisely. A qualitative research provides a picture of empirical reality behind a phenomenon that is suitable and appropriate between the empirical reality and the prevailing theory along with descriptive methods. This qualitative research used a verbal and pictorial data collection [3]. Verbal data were derived from interview scripts, field notes, personal documents, memo notes, manuscripts and other official documents. Pictorial data include various photos and videos of performances, calls/buildings, and equipments or facilities for performances, as well as direct observations of performance events. Data collection combine four sub-models of observations namely complete participants, observers as participants, complete observers, and on other occasions are also participants as observers [4]. Observations on the performance processes pertain to the use of the mythical concept at the beginning to the end ritual.

3 Discussion

It is necessary to understand the trinity between rituals, myths and symbols, in giving a correlation between the three. It operationally cannot be released from one another. The symbol in Turner's view has multi-vocal, semi-vocal polarization, and unification properties, and has an exegesis, positional, and operational dimension [2]. As a system of ceremonies (rituals), the relationship between all three aspects has aspects related to it, and there are aspects of ideas, language, actions (behaviors), and equipment (facilities, infrastructure).

The union of the interrelationship between rituals, myths and symbols in a unity is present in the performance of symbolic expressions in songs, dances, and dramas that blend with spells and prayers in the Seren Taun ritual process. For the community, the teachings of Kiai Madrais seem to be a way of monitoring the appearance of all exhibitions on their appreciation

of diversity. The concept of the Pwahaci myth also describes the transitional rite of life stages (birth, marriage, and death), as a structure for organizing aspects of rituals along with various ritualistic and artistic acts, as an "aesthetic drama" in the Seren Taun ritual process.

The teaching of appreciation guidance in Seren Taun emphasizes human efforts to cleanse the mind of negative influences from other beings outside of humans themselves, which has the innate nature of the creature. On the other hand, God created human beings from acining bumi (the earth essence), containing soil substances, and water, fire and air substances, given the spirit of united life (ngadalit) [5].

Man is the noblest creation compared to other creatures. Human nobility consists of three important elements, namely raga badag (body) and it is the material that does not have any strengths, so it is necessary to have a life force that moves. The body can grow because of a growing body that is smooth; raga halus (a subtle body as part of substance or answer of God) in all creations, whose qualities are different, giving rise to a will, a desire, a feeling, creativity, and inspiration. The spirit is the soul of God's life; hurip is the power of living the Lord's own substance; life is a motion of life; light is the power of influence of goodness; and soul is the movement of forces that moves around; and raga kasar (abusive body as part of customs, habits, attitudes or typical human behaviors), that humans have sir, rasa, and pikir, each of which is different from the behaviors of animals and plants that are only driven by instincts and "wild freedom" are also different from static inanimate objects, and only moves when there is an external influence [6]. It is reasonable to realize that non-human beings do not have awareness, feelings and understanding, so that they do not have the ability to return to their origin directly. To return to the origin, they must be perfected first through an intermediary of human beings.

Referring to the Strathof's explanation, humans have five distinctive humanitarian characteristics as the basis of all their life behaviors, namely welas asih, tata karma unda usuk, budi daya-budi basa, wiwaha yuda nagara [6]. Welas asih (compassion) is love that is the basis of solidarity or human relations with others, nature and its contents; tata krama is manners in terms of association, mutual respect and dignity, in accordance with the relational level; Unda usuk is an attitude and a speech to people who are worthy of respect; Budi daya-budi basa means that "budi" (mind) is a personality, "daya" (power) is the driving force of behaviors, and "basa" means language or speech considerably. This is the distinctive character of a nation in which the form (an anatomical structure, face, skin color), language, customs, characters (letters), and culture is of paramount importance. The peculiarities of a nation are the nature that comes from God. Therefore, every nation must respect, uphold, understand, and use the characteristics of its own people according to the will of God who bestows it.

Human understanding and life provide awareness that humans have duties and responsibilities for preserving djawa Sunda. The positional symbol of Dewi Pwahaci is an aesthetic description of human pilgrimage in achieving the "Sampurnaning hurip sajatining mati", which is abstracted as perfect life and a true death, meaning to live in the way of God and must return to God (the Creator). Humans seek happiness not for themselves but by bringing all the spirits that are in themselves to be with other humans to get happiness. This can be achieved by carrying out three advice known as Pikukuh Tilu consisting of Ngaji Badan, Iman Kana Tanah, Ngeblat Ka Ratu-Raja.

Pwahaci is a basic subject of ideas about humans and their lives, in their duties and responsibilities, which emerge in a wide variety of aesthetic actions (appreciation), including the act of reciting the body. Understanding the concept of Pwahaci provides guidance on spiritual awareness of the image of human divinity from God, namely in carrying out the djawa sunda (and having anjawad lan anjawab roh susun kang den tunda), namely filtering,

composing, and perfecting all spirits into the spirit of humanity, which is part of Ngeblat ka Ratu-raja arranged to be even or fair, so that human beings can be perfect when returning to the Creator. As a true mother of the earth (The Mother God) is interpreted as roh hurip tanah pakukmpulan, the emergence of all the spirits of life. Dewi Pwahaci has a nationality value that is part of the guidance of the Iman Kana Tanah, namely Tanah Air (Mother Nature) namely Sundanese customs or culture in the percentage of artistic expressions through the Seren Taun ritual process.

4 Conclusion

The ritual process of Seren Taun is defined as a human pilgrimage to achieve the perfection of life, which is to live the guidance in maintaining the harmony of human relations with nature, God, and others. Furthermore, it becomes a pattern of appreciation guidance, namely the divine guidance, guidance of the universe, and noble guidance concerning humanity and nationality. The Pwahaci myth is a dominant symbol that has a multivocal meaning, the Mother Earth (The Mother God), the Mother Earth, and Motherland. The positional dimension of the Pwahaci Myth symbol results in the ritual action of the entire Seren Taun ritual processes to take place. Aspects pertaining to the ritual system (a ceremony) consist of ideas, language, ritual behaviors, and equipment to carry out aesthetic expressions. The performance of the peak procession of Seren Taun through Ngajayak (offering of produce), babarit (the Pamuka Marga Waluya prayer), the pounding of rice, eating together, and the distribution of rice produced by nutu, as a series of processes that have a perfect meaning, are all interpretations of the Pwahaci Myth, through prayer, dance, music or songs, eating sanctified food, and the pounding of rice as a symbol of togetherness, each of which shows various artistic expressions throughout the Seren Taun ritual process.

The Dewi Pwahaci myth is the emotional bond of preservation of customs, strong shared values and identities, creating social ties in maintaining interpersonal relationships, social integration of people of different religions, tribes, customs, and beliefs. The Dewi Pwahaci myth is a natural cosmic spiritual teaching that becomes a basic positional idea of dominant symbols in the Seren Taun ritual process.

Dewi Pwahaci shows her positionality towards (1) Dadung's Party Ritual, as a way to live up to the guidance in terms of human relations with nature. On the other hand, Dadung's party is also a picture of the figure of "cattle herders and fields", which means the same as pwahaci in guarding and perfecting the nature; (2) The spiritual song presupposes the dramatization of two stages of birth, growth, maturity and death as shown in the Pwahaci Dance, Ngararemokeun Pare; (3) The Seren Taun Peak Procession is specifically shown the next day, on the line side is a series of processes that have a perfect meaning. The process is through the Ngajayak rite (the produce), babarit (the prayers of Pamuka Marga Waluya/Rajah Pwahaci), rice mash (nutu), eating together, and the distribution of nutu rice. All expressions of prayers, dances, music or songs, eating together the purified food, pounding rice (togetherness values) have become positional symbols of the concept of the Pwahaci Myth that leads to the emotional bond of preservation of customs, values and identities to create social bonds in maintaining interpersonal relationships. The social integration of society is different from religions, ethnicities, customs, and beliefs and gratitude in peace.

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