



## ***Tarawangsa* Traditional Music: An Ethnomusicological Study in Sukaluyu Village, Girimukti Village, Sumedang**

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### **Abstract**

*Tarawangsa* traditional music in Sukaluyu Village, Sumedang Regency, has undergone a significant transformation due to the community's social, cultural, and religious dynamics. Once a sacred function in the Bubur Sura ritual that contains elements of belief in Dewi Sri and ancestors, this art has now shifted to become a medium for entertainment, therapy, and public performances. This study aims to examine the changing function of *Tarawangsa* in the context of contemporary Sukaluyu society. The method used is qualitative-descriptive, with data collection techniques through participatory observation and in-depth interviews with artists and local communities. The results showed that shifts in community values, the influence of globalization, and changes in religious orientation have led to the cessation of the main ritual practice since 2018. Nevertheless, *Tarawangsa* has survived through thanksgiving performances, healing ceremonies, and cultural activities in local media and art festivals. These findings confirm that *Tarawangsa* is a dynamic and adaptive cultural heritage, with strong preservation potential when managed in a contextual and participatory manner.

**Keywords:** *Tarawangsa*; function change; traditional music; local culture; globalization

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### **INTRODUCTION**

*Tarawangsa* music is a form of traditional music that characterizes the culture of the Sundanese people, especially in the Sumedang region, West Java. *Tarawangsa* is known as instrumental music that is sacred and closely related to the implementation of ritual ceremonies of the supporting community (Abdul Malik et al., 2023; Cornelius & Natvig, 2022). It is played with two main instruments, the *Tarawangsa* (a two-stringed stringed instrument) and the *jentreng* (a seven-stringed stringed instrument) (Sumartias et al. 2019; Supriatna

2015; Yulaeliah 2006)

In Sumedang Regency, the *Tarawangsa* music tradition only developed in two locations, namely in Rancakalong Sub-district and in Sukaluyu Village, Girimukti Village, North Sumedang Subdistrict. Although it has a similar form and function to ritual music, there are significant differences in the social context and support for its preservation in the two areas. In Rancakalong, *Tarawangsa* is often played in Bubur Sura and Ngalaksa ceremonies, and its implementation has received attention and support from the local government. In fact, it has been included in the official cultural

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agenda of Sumedang Regency, making it attractive not only to local people but also to people from outside the region and foreign tourists (Tahroni and Irianto 2023).

In contrast, in Sukaluyu Village, *Tarawangsa* music is only performed during the Bubur Sura ritual ceremony, and it is Sukaluyu in nature, involving only the local community. Local government support for this tradition is almost non-existent, whether in the form of funding, promotion, or cultural documentation (Supriatna 2003, 2015). As a result, the implementation of rituals in Sukaluyu relies entirely on the personal initiative of rurukan owners (heirloom storage and ceremony organizers), without the active involvement of local policy makers. This has resulted in the tradition's lack of presence in the regional cultural discourse and contributed to the local community's declining enthusiasm for ritual practices and *Tarawangsa* music (Leach, 2021; Maulid et al., 2022).

In understanding the changing function and existence of *Tarawangsa* music in Sukaluyu, the theory of cultural change becomes very relevant. According to Koentjaraningra (2009), culture is not static, but always changes in response to society's social, economic, and religious dynamics. These changes can be in the form of diffusion, innovation, or assimilation. Meanwhile, the functionalism theory (1975) stated that every cultural element, including traditional music, has a certain function in maintaining the balance of social life. When the original function of a cultural element (e.g., the sacred function of *Tarawangsa* music) weakens, society will look for new forms to keep the element relevant, such as entertainment or therapy. Thus, this theoretical approach helps to see the dynamics of *Tarawangsa* not as a symptom of decline, but as a natural process of adaptation within a living cultural system.

Research on traditional *Tarawangsa* music in West Java, especially in Rancakalong, has been conducted using ethnomusicology, sociology, and religious and cultural communication studies. (Cornelius & Natvig, 2022). Some studies, such as the

one conducted by Rahma, Khadijah, and Anwar (2025), highlighted the communication function of *Tarawangsa* and *Jentreng* music in the Ngalaksa ceremony. Putri (2019) examines the relationship between Bubur Sura tradition and local Islamic values in Sumedang, while Aliyudin et al. (2020) emphasize the socio-religious and social cohesion dimensions of the Ngalaksa tradition. (Isnendes, 2019) emphasizes the socio-religious and social cohesion dimensions of the Ngalaksa tradition.

These studies show that *Tarawangsa* music in Rancakalong has become an object of interdisciplinary academic attention, from musical, social, to spiritual aspects (Meylani & Hernawan, 2024; Rahma et al., 2025a; Susilawati et al., 2024). This shows that traditions in Rancakalong are well-documented and receive considerable attention, including from the local government as part of the cultural preservation agenda.

However, academic studies that specifically examine the practice of *Tarawangsa* music in Sukaluyu Village, Girimukti Village, Sumedang, are still very minimal, almost non-existent. In fact, historically and structurally, *Tarawangsa* music in Sukaluyu has cultural roots that are commensurate with those in Rancakalong, including its involvement in the Bubur Sura ceremony. The difference lies in the social context and institutional support that influence the dynamics of its survival.

The lack of documentation and in-depth analysis of the practice of *Tarawangsa* music in Sukaluyu has resulted in a lack of understanding of how this music has developed or even regressed along with social, religious, and generational changes (Gufran & Setiawan, 2023; Meylani & Hernawan, 2024; Susilawati et al., 2024). On the other hand, this is an important gap in the discourse of ethnomusicology, especially regarding how a local tradition survives or is lost in the vortex of changing societal values.

On the other hand, this is an important gap in the discourse of ethnomusicology, especially regarding how a local tra-

dition survives or is lost in the vortex of changing societal values. As described earlier, ritual ceremonial activities involving traditional *Tarawangsa* music in Rancakalong can still be witnessed and continue to take place regularly (Mulyati and Suparli n.d.; Sumartias et al. 2019; Tahroni and Irianto 2023). This is not the case in Sukaluyu Village, where the Bubur Sura ritual ceremony has not been held since 2018. This condition occurs due to various factors, one of which is the influence of the progress of the times, especially in the field of science and technology. People now have very easy access to various information through various media, including general knowledge and religious knowledge (Iqbal & Asman, 2021; Madhani et al., 2021; Mubarak & Sunarto, 2024).

This easy access to information broadens people's horizons, including in terms of faith and religious understanding (Marjani, 2023; Pearce et al., 2021). Along with that, there is a rejection of various forms of local cultural beliefs and practices that are considered not in line with religious teachings (Jamaluddin, 2022; Said & Saidy, 2024). The social changes occurring in Sukaluyu reflect the community's values shift due to the influx of modernization, urban lifestyles, and differences in preferences between the younger and previous generations. The traditional values that form the basis of the ceremony and *Tarawangsa* music are now seen as less relevant by most people, especially the younger generation (Ferawati and Setiawan 2023; Rahma, Khadijah, and Anwar 2025).

In addition, changes in religious understanding and practice also affect the continuity of local culture. (Pillai, 2022; Ziyatbay, 2024). As a result, community participation in the Bubur Sura ritual ceremony, which used to be held annually on a regular basis, declined significantly and was eventually discontinued. As a result, the owner of the venue decided to close the event. The closure of the Bubur Sura ritual directly affected the sustainability of traditional *Tarawangsa* music, which had been the main element in the ritual procession.

Based on these conditions, this research focuses on studying the life of traditional *Tarawangsa* music in Sukaluyu Village after it no longer functions as music accompanying ritual ceremonies. This study is important to see how the sustainability and role of *Tarawangsa* music are in the midst of its supporting community in a changing socio-cultural context.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with an ethnomusicology framework, which views music as an integral part of a community's cultural system (Creswell 2014). This approach was chosen because it is able to reveal in depth the meaning, function, and transformation of *Tarawangsa* music in the socio-cultural context of the Bubur Syura ceremony in Sukaluyu Village, Girimukti Village, Sumedang Regency.

The main methods used in this research include:

### Participant observations

Observations were made directly at several Bubur Syura ceremonies before the activity was discontinued (last recorded until 2017). Researchers also conducted audio-visual documentation of *Tarawangsa* music performances as part of archiving efforts. In this process, the researcher took the role of a passive participant, focusing on observing the patterns of social interaction, the musical structure of the presentation, and the audience's response to the performance in a ritual context.

In-depth interviews were conducted with some key informants, including:

- The *Tarawangsa* cast: Anang Supria, Hani, Mamat, Amat, and Yayat.
- Site owner/rurukan guardian: Endang Heryana, A. Sumarya, and H. Omah.
- Traditional leaders and local people who have been involved in the Bubur Syura ceremony: Ayut, Mamat, Anah, Anda, Ucin, and Usep Rohmana.
- Other religious and community leaders who have a view of the socio-religious

gious dynamics that influence changes in these cultural practices.

Documentation studies were conducted through the collection of various written and visual data, such as archives of activities, recordings of performances, photo documentation, as well as relevant articles or previous research, especially those related to *Tarawangsa* music and traditional ceremonies in the Sumedang region.

The data obtained were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively, using the theoretical framework of cultural functionalism and the theory of social change as an interpretative foundation (Ferawati & Setiawan, 2023; Pillai, 2022; Ziyatbay, 2024). The analysis was conducted to understand the relationship between musical practice and the social and cultural dynamics of the supporting community, as well as to explore forms of adaptation or resistance to changing times.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Tarawangsa* Traditional Music in Bubur Sura Ritual Ceremony Activities

*Tarawangsa* music in the Sumedang region is an integral part of the belief system and traditional rituals of the community, especially in the Bubur Sura and Ngalaksa ceremonies. This music does not function as mere entertainment, but is present as a means of spiritual communication between humans and supernatural forces that are believed to maintain fertility, tranquility, and the safety of the village that carries it out.

The two forms of ceremony, Bubur Sura and Ngalaksa, still survive and are carried out for generations in two main areas, namely Rancakalong sub-district and Sukaluyu village in North Sumedang sub-district. In Rancakalong, almost all villages carry out the Bubur Sura ceremony as part of a collective tradition, while the Ngalaksa ceremony is centralized at the sub-district level and carried out on a larger scale. In contrast, in North Sumedang Sub-district, the Bubur Sura ceremony is

practiced exclusively in Sukaluyu Village, Girimukti Village.

The Bubur Sura ceremony is usually held annually on the 10th of Muharram in the lunar calendar, while the Ngalaksa ceremony is held in July, both with the main purpose of expressing gratitude and asking for protection from danger (*tolak bala*). In Rancakalong, every Bubur Sura ritual is accompanied by a *Tarawangsa* music performance, which serves as the main marker of the continuity of the ritual and reinforces the sacred atmosphere.

The connection between agriculture and the *Tarawangsa* music rite reflects the cosmological outlook of agrarian societies. In many traditional communities, including Sundanese society, there is a tradition of rice harvesting and planting ceremonies, which are laden with myth and symbolism. Rice is not only seen as an agricultural product, but also as a sacred entity derived from the cosmic marriage between the elements of heaven and earth. It is believed to be the embodiment of Dewi Sri, a mythological figure who was thought to bring life and prosperity from the supernatural realm.

This view thrives among the people of Sukaluyu Village and its surroundings, who manifest it in various forms of rituals such as Bubur Sura. In Sundanese culture, rice is positioned as a symbol of life, a staple food, and a spiritual medium between humans and nature. In Sumedang, rice is even personified with local terms such as “Kersa Nyai,” “Nu Geulis,” and “Dangdang Sri,” all of which refer to the image of Dewi Sri as a representation of women and fertility.

Rice, as a result of the community's hard work in farming, not only fulfills physical needs but also becomes a link between humans, ancestors, and the universe, which is manifested through rituals such as Bubur Sura and Seren Taun. These traditions are a form of gratitude for the crops as well as a form of maintaining the cosmic balance between humans, nature, and the Creator.



### Function of *Tarawangsa* Music

In the Bubur Sura ceremony, not only are the ingredients for making porridge and sasajen (offerings) important elements, but also the presence of traditional *Tarawangsa* music which has a central function. This music is seen as a medium for spiritual communication between the ceremony's performers and the metaphysical entities, especially Dewi Sri and karuhun (ancestral spirits), who are believed to maintain the village's fertility, prosperity, and protection. In this context, *Tarawangsa* serves not only as entertainment but also as an intermediary between the real and supernatural worlds.

In both Bubur Sura and Ngalaksa ceremonies, *Tarawangsa* has a vital function as it is believed to bring Dewi Sri and facilitate the presence of ancestral spirits. Art, in this case music, plays an important role in religious ceremonies because of its ability to express the transcendent through symbols and artistic expression. In many cultures, including Sundanese, things that transcend human experience are often expressed in symbolic form, and one of the most effective forms of symbolism is through art, particularly music.

### Structure and Function of Music in *Tarawangsa*

Traditional *Tarawangsa* music is a small ensemble that is only played by two string instruments, namely ngek-ngek (a type of rebab with two strings) and jentreng (a seven-stringed kacapi). In the performance, the two instruments play instrumental songs, where one instrument and the other have different functions and playing techniques. However, despite using only two instruments, both are able to produce music that is very interesting and favored by its supporters.

Although the *ngek-ngek* instrument is a stringed instrument similar to the rebab, there are specific things in playing it. If the two strings of the rebab are played by swiping, in the *ngek-ngek* instrument, only one string is swiped, while the second string is played by plucking using the in-

dex finger of the left hand as the end marker of the song (similar to goongan in gamelan). With one string, *Ngek-ngek* plays all the melodies for sacred ceremonial and hiburan songs for the community.

The other instrument, called jentreng or kacapi, is played by plucking with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand and the forefinger of the left hand. Jentreng functions as an accompaniment to the melody played by *ngek-ngek*. There are specific things in playing jentreng, namely; the notes played are the benchmark of the song melody played by *ngek-ngek*, so that the notes played by both become harmonious and pleasant to hear; second, the melody played becomes the basis for the rhythm played by both; third, jentreng is a regulator of the speed and slowness of the rhythm played; fourth, the strumming of the jentreng lute emphasizes the sound like a drum in a gamelan performance.

The songs that are usually played in *Tarawangsa* performances are only 17 songs. Because the number of songs consists of only 17 songs, traditional *Tarawangsa* music is often referred to as sasaka seventeen. The 17 songs are divided into six sacred songs that are specifically offered in the context of ritual ceremonies, and 11 entertainment songs that are played after the core procession is complete.

Songs in the context of rituals are divided into several stages and symbolic functions, including:

#### "Saur"

It is the opening song that musically marks the beginning of the ceremony. It does not follow a strict rhythmic structure and is free rhythmic, being a kind of non-verbal "opening greeting". For the community supporting the ritual, the presentation of this saur song signals that the ritual is about to begin.

#### "Pangameut"

In Sundanese, the word pangameut comes from the root ngameut which means to recite a mantra or chant, and the affix pa- which indicates a tool. Therefore,

Pangameut is defined as a song that functions as a summoning tool, or a ritual tool to chant so that Dewi Sri (also known as Kersa Nyai) is willing to attend the ceremony.

### **“Pamapag”**

The word *pamapag* in Sundanese means to welcome or pick up, and this song is interpreted as a medium to welcome Dewi Sri's presence at the ceremony location. In the imagination of the ritual actors, the presentation of this song marks the moment of Dewi Sri's arrival.

### **“Panimang”**

It symbolizes the act of hugging, rocking, or carrying Dewi Sri as a form of love. In this section, female participants carry a *rantang* containing rice, beauty tools, and coins, representing Dewi Sri. Since Dewi Sri is believed to be present, this song is presented as a form of respect and tenderness, as if cradling or rocking her. In this part, the women participating in the ceremony perform a symbolic gesture by swinging a small container (*rantang*) wrapped in cloth, containing rice, beauty tools, and coins. The rice symbolizes Dewi Sri as a female figure, so other female attributes are also included. These *rantang* are taken out of a special storage place called *goah* or *paniisan*. They are then carried in a relay by women who form a semicircle from the *goah* to the center of the ceremonial arena, where the *rantang* are stored.”

### **“Keupat Eundang”**

This song is an introduction so that Dewi Sri can rest in peace after completing her visit. In Sukaluyu, this song is often used as the main finale of a sacred procession.

### **“Bangbalikan”**

Served in the early morning (around 03.00-04.00 WIB), it serves as a symbol of Dewi Sri's return to her original realm and a sign that the spiritual relationship in the ceremony has been completed.

The songs are presented sequential-

ly and form an unbroken musical whole, resembling a sacred medley played only in ritual contexts. The musical structure is repetitive and modal, with *salendro* and *pelog* scales creating a distinctive non-diatonic feel. There are no strict rhythmic patterns as in *gamelan*, but rather free heterophonic forms that leave room for spiritual expression. Performances of this music can last for hours, even overnight, depending on the needs of the ritual.

In addition to songs that are specifically intended for ritual purposes in presenting Dewi Sri and the spirits of the ancestors, the *Bubur Sura* ceremony also presents a number of songs that serve as entertainment for the people who attend. In this entertainment segment, the audience is given the opportunity to dance to the music played by the two main instruments of *Tarawangsa*. The repertoire of entertainment songs performed is relatively limited, including: *Guar Bumi*, *Angin-Angin*, *Ayun-Ambing*, *Dengdo*, *Bangun*, *Sirnagalih*, *Pangairan*, *Pagelaran*, *Pancawarna*, *Limbanagan*, and *Jemplang*.

In the presentation of these entertainment songs, the supporters of the ceremony are invited to dance accompanied by traditional *Tarawangsa* music. When dancing, the ceremony participants do it in groups. Each group can consist of between five and six people. No standard movements must be done while dancing with *Tarawangsa*. They seem to really enjoy and appreciate the songs played, so many of them dance in a trance state.

### **Changes in *Tarawangsa* Traditional Music in the Sukaluyu Community**

In general, the condition of traditional music as part of Indonesia's local culture is facing an alarming situation (Fakultas & Ryan Hernandi, 2022; Sari et al., 2023). Many art forms that are classified as rare are now on the verge of extinction (Amri, 2022; Fakultas & Ryan Hernandi, 2022; Novianti et al., 2022), either because it has lost their social context or because of a lack of regeneration. One of the main factors influencing this condition is the shift in cul-

tural values in the community (Ahen et al., 2022; Bonnell & Hunt, 2023; Hodgkinson, 2024), especially due to the penetration of digital technology and massive globalization. Local cultural identity, which should mark the uniqueness of a community, is slowly being abandoned, especially by the younger generation, who are more interested in global popular culture.

The rapid development of communication technology, especially social media and video-sharing platforms, has accelerated the process of cultural exchange across regions and nations. This has created a new cultural landscape that tends to emphasize global aesthetics, modernity, and visual efficiency, often at odds with traditional arts' contemplative, sacred and contextual characteristics. As a result, traditional arts such as *Tarawangsa* are losing relevance in the eyes of the younger generation. These arts are often considered "old-fashioned", uninteresting, and have no economic value when compared to the instant and commercial nature of popular culture. In addition, low cultural literacy is also an obstacle in fostering appreciation for traditional arts as part of the nation's collective identity and intangible heritage (Pillai, 2022; Ziyatbay, 2024).

Researchers' observations in Sukaluyu Village, Sumedang Regency, show a significant decline in community participation in *Tarawangsa*, both as performers and as audiences. The younger generation is indifferent to the traditional arts that grew up in their neighborhood. They are reluctant to get involved in training or performances and show a lack of interest in simply being present as spectators. This view is reflected in their passive attitude towards cultural preservation and the influence of modern lifestyles that increasingly distance them from local values.

Furthermore, these changes are not only influenced by globalization, but also by internal transformations within the community itself. The increasing influence of more puritanical Islamic teachings in the Sukaluyu area has had an impact on the community's perception of cultural

practices that contain non-Islamic symbolic and spiritual elements. *Tarawangsa* music, which is closely associated with the ritual worship of Dewi Sri and the honoring of ancestral spirits, has begun to be perceived as incompatible with the Islamic teachings of the majority of the community today. This has led to a cultural dilemma, where people are faced with a tension between preserving ancestral traditions and adapting to increasingly strong religious beliefs.

The most obvious impact of this change can be seen in the indigenous community's decision in Sukaluyu regarding the annual Bubur Sura ritual. The decline in the number of participants from year to year prompted the extended family of H. Aan Makmur, the owner of the rurukan and the customary authority in the implementation of the ritual, to hold deliberations with the community. In the meeting, it was decided that the 2018 Bubur Sura ritual would be the last ritual to be carried out in full. This means that since 2019, this annual tradition has officially been discontinued, ending one form of cultural practice that has been going on for generations.

This decision marks an important turning point in the journey of *Tarawangsa* in Sukaluyu, as well as reflecting how fragile traditional arts are when not supported by adequate social, cultural, and ideological ecosystems. In this context, *Tarawangsa* has not only regressed as a musical performance but has also lost its function as a sacred and symbolic means of connecting people to the cosmos, their ancestors, and their homeland.

### **The Changing Function of *Tarawangsa* Music**

Culture is dynamic and constantly changing. Even without the influence of foreign cultures, transformation in a culture continues along with social, economic, and mindset changes. In every cultural system, there is room for freedom for individuals and groups to make cultural innovations, and from this freedom, variations

of actions are born, which can gradually become part of the culture itself. This view is in line with the idea of Leach (2021), which states that music as a cultural element is not static, but dynamic and always undergoes adjustments to the times and its social context.

This is also the case with *Tarawangsa* traditional music in Sukaluyu Village. Although *Tarawangsa* is no longer performed in sacred contexts such as the Bubur Sura ritual ceremony, its existence is not necessarily extinct. This music still lives on through more flexible and contextualised forms of performance according to the needs of the supporting community. One form of adaptation can be seen in the use of *Tarawangsa* in various social activities such as family thanksgiving, weddings, child births, or four-month pregnancy anniversaries (*nujul mulud*), which are part of the traditions of the people in Sukaluyu, Girimukti, and the North Sumedang region.

### Performances at Thanksgiving Events

In practice, the Sukaluyu community presents music as entertainment as well as a symbolic tool in various forms of thanksgiving events. The type of music performed varies depending on the preferences of the organising family. Some common choices of music include *gembyung*, *hadroh*, *terbangan*, *wawacan*, and *Tarawangsa* music.

In the context of thanksgiving, *Tarawangsa* music retains a musical structure that is identical to the performance at the Bubur Sura ceremony. The arrangement of songs such as *saur*, *pangameut*, *pamapag*, *panimang*, *keupat eundang*, and *bangbalikan* is still presented sequentially as a form of transcendental communication, although the formal ritual context has been removed. This music is still believed to have the spiritual power to invoke blessings, safety, and abundance from Dewi Sri and respected ancestors.

However, based on the researcher's observations, the duration of each song played at thanksgiving events tends to be shorter than the duration when performed

in ritual contexts. This indicates an adjustment to the needs and time available in non-ritual activities.

After all the sacred songs are played, the *Tarawangsa* performance continues with a more open and participatory entertainment segment. The audience is given the freedom to dance to the *Tarawangsa*, and they can even directly order the songs they want. In this section, there is no fixed song order, so songs can be repeated on demand. This pattern shows a shift in function from sacred and closed to more profane and open to the public.

### Difference between Ritual and Thanksgiving Performance

Although the musical structure is retained, there are fundamental differences between *Tarawangsa* performances in the context of the Bubur Sura ritual and in thanksgiving events. This difference lies mainly in the symbolic elements and the requirements of the performance. In the Bubur Sura ritual, there are a number of sacred elements that must be fulfilled, such as the determination of the time of implementation based on the traditional calendar, the presence of the statue of Dewi Sri, the use of 1,000 types of food ingredients to make porridge, and offerings and offerings that have deep philosophical and spiritual meanings.

In contrast, thanksgiving has no fixed rules regarding timing or symbolic requirements. The whole organisation depends on the will of the family and their economic capacity. There is no statue of Dewi Sri, and the offerings are simple. This shows that the function of *Tarawangsa* has shifted from the sacred to the social, from a medium of ritual to a more flexible and adaptive medium of cultural expression.

### Tarawangsa as a Therapeutic Medium

For some people in Sukaluyu Village, the belief in spiritual power in traditional cultural practices is still very strong, including in terms of presenting Dewi Sri and the spirits of ancestors through the medium of traditional *Tarawangsa* music.



In this context, *Tarawangsa* not only functions as entertainment or a means of cultural expression, but is also believed to have a therapeutic dimension related to healing and restoring physical and psychological health.

The trance phenomenon that occurs in *Tarawangsa* performances is often understood as a form of supernatural communication between the human world and the world of ancestors. People who dance in trance are believed to be possessed by the spirits of ancestors who have spiritual powers. In this state, any advice, gesture, or utterance that comes out of the individual is considered an important message and must be obeyed by the community. One incident recorded in the researcher's observations shows that a possessed elder delivered advice to a family with a sick member to organise a healing ceremony accompanied by a *Tarawangsa* music performance.

A few days after the incident, the family organises a healing ritual involving the performance of *Tarawangsa* music. While there are no significant changes in the musical structure of the performance – with songs such as *saur*, *pangameut*, *pamapag*, and *keupat eundang* still performed in sequence – there have been adjustments in the intentions and prayers that accompany the ceremony. In this context, the *ijab kabul* and prayers explicitly aim to ask for healing for sick family members.

The symbolic elements that accompany the ceremony also show the active involvement of the community. Each invited guest is given incense by the family to be used as a medium for prayer. This practice reflects that the ceremony is not just an individual act but part of the community's collective solidarity with fellow members experiencing difficulties.

The ceremony begins with the sick person being put to sleep in the centre of the performance arena. Sacred songs are played in sequence, and a *saehu*, an individual believed to have spiritual abilities, dances to the music. In some sections, the *saehu* makes prayer-like gestures and

blows blessings on the sick person. Towards the end of the *keupat eundang* song, the researcher witnessed that the sick person began to show physical reactions, such as sitting up slowly in the centre of the arena. This event triggered a sense of emotion and happiness on the part of the family, as well as reinforcing their belief that this practice brings blessings and has real healing effects.

### **Dimensions of Therapy in Cultural Context**

This shows that *Tarawangsa* functions not only as an aesthetic cultural product but also as a traditional therapeutic medium that is integrated with the local belief system. This therapeutic function does not stand alone, but rather merges with the spiritual and symbolic dimensions of the supporting community. In this context, healing is not only understood as a medical process, but also as a spiritual process involving ancestral powers, social collectivity, and cultural expression.

The function of *Tarawangsa* as a therapeutic medium is proof that traditional arts can have a broad use value in people's lives. It is able to fill the spaces of psychological, social, and spiritual needs, especially in conditions when modern science and medicine have not been fully accepted or considered adequate by local communities. This important role of traditional music in healing practices indicates that the preservation of traditional arts can be done by maintaining the performance form and recognising and utilising the socio-cultural functions still alive in community practices.

### **Filled a Traditional Music Performance Event**

Traditional *Tarawangsa* music in Sukaluyu Village, which was originally played exclusively in the context of the *bubur Sura* ritual, has now experienced a shift in function to a more flexible and adaptive form of musical performance to the demands of the community. This transformation shows the existence of cultural

dynamics that allow Tarawangsa to survive, even though it has been separated from its original sacred context. This shift does not necessarily erase the spiritual values contained in the music, but rather adjusts its function according to the social needs of contemporary society.

Besides being performed in the context of thanksgiving ceremonies and healing rituals, Tarawangsa music from Sukaluyu is also often presented in various entertainment events and representations of Sundanese culture in public spaces. Some of these include local Sumedang radio and television broadcasts, seminars or discussions on traditional music performances, Sundanese traditional music festivals, and other cultural events organised by government institutions and local communities.

In the context of these non-ritual performances, the presentation of Tarawangsa music has been adjusted both in terms of musical structure and repertoire choice. Unlike the *bubur Sura* ceremony, which presents a sequential arrangement of songs with symbolic and spiritual meanings, in entertainment performances, the songs performed are freer and do not refer to sacred song structures. The choice of songs in these performances is generally limited to entertainment songs, and is often tailored to the requests of the event organisers or the audience. If there is no specific request, the musicians determine the songs themselves.

The number of songs presented in such an event is usually between three and five, depending on the duration and format of the event. The favourites in these non-ritual performances are salendro-tuned songs, such as *Angin-angin*, *Guarbumi*, *Pangairan*, and *Pagelaran*. These songs are chosen because they have a lighter and more communicative melodic feel, making them more accessible to a wide audience, especially the younger generation, unfamiliar with traditional ritual structures' musical complexities.

This transformation indicates a process of cultural adaptation that maintains

the existence of Tarawangsa and expands its audience. By performing in various public spaces and local mass media, *Tarawangsa* music has the opportunity to remain relevant, especially amidst the challenges of modernisation and the penetration of popular culture. This change in function also shows that the sustainability of a tradition does not always have to be tied to its original form, but can be expanded through reinterpretation of functions and meanings according to the context of the times.

## CONCLUSIONS

*Tarawangsa* traditional music in Sukaluyu Village has undergone a significant transformation along with changes in the community's social, cultural and religious values. Previously having a central role in the *Bubur Sura* ritual ceremony, which is sacred and full of spiritual symbolism, the function of *Tarawangsa* has shifted to a medium of performance, entertainment, and therapy. Although the annual ritual practice has been discontinued since 2018, the community still maintains the existence of Tarawangsa through various activities such as thanksgiving, traditional medicine, and art performances in public spaces and media.

These changes show that although *Tarawangsa's* original function as part of local wisdom has declined, the music has not become extinct but rather adapted to the new context. The survival of *Tarawangsa* depends on the awareness and involvement of the community, especially the younger generation, in maintaining and revitalising this cultural heritage. Thus, preserving Tarawangsa is an effort to maintain tradition and a form of dynamic cultural adaptation to face the challenges of globalisation and modernity.

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