

Construction of Cultural Resilience through the Exploration of Seblang Olehsari Banyuwangi Ritual Philosophical Value

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Abstract

Seblang Olehsari Banyuwangi is a sacred ritual containing moral messages symbolized in symbols. The symbols need to be explored in order to be understood better and serve as a guideline for the community to implement collective norms as an effort to strengthen social solidarity. Strong social solidarity will strengthen cultural resilience to cope with the current globalization of culture. Recognizing that to construct social solidarity requires a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical aspects, so that Seblang ritual from the philosophical aspect needs to be studied more deeply. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the philosophical value of Seblang Olehsari ritual as cultural resilience. The benefits that can be taken, this research was expected to show to the society about the need to maintain Seblang Olehsari ritual as one form of efforts to maintain the local wisdom. The type of this research was descriptive with in-depth interview data collection technique and participant observation. The data analysis process used philosophical approach, then examined the validity of data with data triangulation. The results of this research could be concluded that the philosophical values of Seblang ritual could be categorized based on ritual property and ritual procession that has the value of recommendation appreciate the universe and maintain the balance of the environment and preserve the nature. The construction of cultural resilience of philosophical value was shaped by cultural value systems, changing adaptation, integration functions and social cohesion and transformative.

Keywords

cultural resilience; philosophical value; seblang olehsari ritual

INTRODUCTION

Cultural resilience has capacity from the community or different cultural system in order to absorb the disturbance and re-range while having changes so that it can defend the key element from the structure and

identity which secure its uniqueness (Healy, 2006). Cultural resilience is a multidimensional construction. The cultural resilience

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is a definition which is negotiated between the individual and cultural community, with the tendency to show the cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity (Ungar, 2008). The cultural resilience will weaken if the cultural system weakens.

The cultural resilience weakening could be seen from the results of the survey from National Resilience Measurement Laboratory (Labkurtannas) of National Defense Institution (Lemhannas) of The Republic of Indonesia which shows that the phrase of social-cultural has been weakening amounted of 6%. Overall, the National Resilience Index of Indonesia in 2016 is in less firm condition. Considering the previous data, the local culture as the root of national culture should be strengthened. One of the regions which possess local culture wealth is Banyuwangi District.

Banyuwangi District has a unique culture; it is *Seblang*, in which it is a tribal ritual of *Osing* Tribe which has been carried out for generations. *Seblang* ritual has been appearing since 1771 which was followed with the change of its time when Islam came to Banyuwangi, it was carried out in a week after Idul Fitri and Idul Adha. In the year of 1930-1970, *Seblang* ritual was shown on the land or floor which grounded with a plaited mat shaped a *kalangan* (circle) so that there was no a clear boundary between the dancer and the ones who strike the drum, also the audiences. Starting from 1984, *Seblang* ritual was shown on *genjot* or stage (Wessing, 2009). Besides, previously *Seblang* was carried out in all regions in Banyuwangi, but later it was only shown in two villages of Glagah Subdistrict, they were Olehsari and Bakungan Villages.

Seblang is a ritual which is carried out in order to purify the village, defense from evil, form of gratitude toward the result of the harvest shown in magical dance, it is a dancing performance where the dancers are in unconscious condition because they are possessed by a spirit and it is accompanied with classical Javanese songs (Metasari, 2015). Before being performed for the first time in Olehsari Village in 1930, *Seblang* ritual was performed annually in

Kemiren Village located in the north side of Olehsari Village. Previously, the villagers of Kemiren Village (Mbah Tompo) bought a set of Barong art appliances completed with its orchestra. Some times after Mbah Tompo bought the previous Barong art appliances, Mbah Sapuah (Seblang Dancer) was possessed by a spirit suddenly. The evil spirit which possessed Mbah Sapuah's body wanted that *Seblang* ritual was moved to the south side of the village, it was Olehsari Village because in Kemiren Village had already Barong art and it was in order to defend from disease spread (Khoirunnisa, 2014).

Seblang ritual has differences between Olehsari Village and Bakungan Village in term of its performance time. In Olehsari Village, the performance is carried out in one week after Idul Fitri, while in Bakungan Village; it is performed in one week after Idul Adha. *Seblang* Olehsari Banyuwangi is a sacred ritual containing moral messages symbolized in symbols. The symbols contained in *Seblang Olehsari* ritual are unique and interesting because they contain philosophical symbols.

The term of value in philosophical study is used to show the abstract noun and it means worth and goodness, and the verb which means certain soulful act in giving value. A value is an ability believed that it is existed in certain thing which causing people or community to be interested in it. so, value is quality attached in certain object, not the object itself (Kaelan, 2005). *Seblang* Olehsari is a symbolic ritual with full of meaning. The symbols need to be explored so that they can be understood and become the guideline of community to hold the collective norms as an effort to strengthen the social solidarity. More than that, the strong social solidarity will strengthen the cultural resilience in order to face the globalization of culture which is currently happening. Recognizing that to construct social solidarity requires a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical aspects, so that *Seblang* ritual from the philosophical aspect needs to be studied more deeply.

The problem of this research is about how to construct the cultural resilience

through the exploration of philosophical value of *Seblang* Olehsari Banyuwangi ritual. This research is expected to give benefits in showing the people about the need of defending *Seblang* Olehsari Banyuwangi ritual as a form of defending the local wisdom in strengthening the cultural resilience.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative method which gave the whole and overall description about the exploration of philosophical value of *Seblang* ritual and construction of philosophical value used to defend the culture. The data were received from oral data or expressions, way of thinking, view from the research subject from interview and observation toward the subject attitude, so that the data from the field were able to explain the interpretation of the subject's attitude. The research location was in Banyuwangi District, such as in the office of Culture and Tourism Department, Olehsari Village Glagah Banyuwangi Sub District. The methodological reason for choosing the research location was mainly covered the following reasons:

- a. The office of Culture and Tourism Department of Banyuwangi is Regional Organization (OPD) which has roles in carrying out programs and activities in the scope of culture and tourism in Banyuwangi District, including in the implementation of *Seblang* ritual;
- b. Olehsari Village, Glagah Sub District as the location of *Seblang* Olehsari ritual performance.

This research was carried out for three months, starting from April until June 2018. The informants of this research were Department of Tradition and Cultural Sanctuary, Department of Culture and Tourism of Banyuwangi District, Ansori as the Cultural Head of Olehsari Village, and Akwan as the keyperson of *Seblang* in Olehsari Village, Suidah as the performer of *Seblang* in Olehsari Village, and all informants who were chosen as purposive sampling.

Mainly, the data collection process of this research was carried out in two ways;

they were investigating the primary and the secondary data. The investigation of the primary data was carried out in two ways. Firstly was through observation. The observation was carried out by direct observation related to the sequence of *Seblang* ritual. In the observation process, the researcher made documentation in the form of videos and photos. During the sequence of *Seblang* ritual, the researcher was not allowed to take a part in the ritual preparation since it should be carried out by the villagers who have been appointed of the keyperson based on the demand of the spirit, so that all things related to *Seblang* ritual procession should not be meddled by other parties. The second was *in-depth interview*. This process was started with getting in the society by having interaction. After successfully getting in, then the indepth interview should be carried out based on the interview guideline which has been arranged previously in order to get the data related to the philosophical values of *Seblang* ritual. Kinds of questions resumed in the interview guideline were open question which gave the opportunity toward the informants to give answers freely as long as it was still the area of the given questions. The next was that all kinds of data gotten from the field, both from observation or indepth interview should be written in the form of interview transcription. The notes in the form of interview transcription would be processed in the form of field note.

The observation of secondary data was carried out by the investigation of philosophical books and scientific articles which have been published in the national and international scientific journals which were related to the researched problems. The secondary data were needed in establishing the initial construction of the research and later it would help the interpretation so that the comprehensive and deep understanding would be received. The data which have been collected in the form of primary and secondary data would be analyzed by philosophical analytical method, such as:

- a. *Verstehen method* was used in order to have symbolic understanding to-

- ward the collected data.
- b. Interpretation method was used in order to describe the philosophical meaning contained in *Seblang* ritual objectively.
 - c. Hermeunetical method was used in order to understand the relation between human being and environment. This method gave an undertsnading toward the text withh deep understanding and it was continued by the interpretation toward the researched subject to catch and explore the relation between human being and environment in the context of human philosophy.
 - d. Inductive method was used in order to analyze the collected data in the form of conclusion. The concluding process was carried out by aposteriory inductive, it was in order to realize a conceptual construction so ththat thhe clear and loggical construction was found related to the relation between human being and environment (Ar-mawi, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Philosophical Value of *Seblang Olehsari* Ritual

Seblang comes from the word '*Seb*' which means silent and '*Lang*' which means ever lasting, so that *Seblang* means a silent dancer and could not be asked to communicate. There is also an opinion which says that it is the acronym from '*Sebele Ilang*' which means the loss of unfortunate. *Seblang* ritual was held to invoke prayer, safety, and fertility to the creator. *Seblang Olehsari* ritual is a gratitude ritual of farmers in ancient times where they were given the gift of God in the form of abundant agricultural products. *Seblang* ritual as a village's gratitude to welfare the community of *Olehsari* village, it also aims to avoid the distress, foster a sense of kinship and solidarity among residents so that good relationship is well maintained. It is driven because there is a sense of unity, the meaning of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, so there is a sense of pride from the community of

Olehsari Village.

"I have not been coming to my brother who was in *Olehsari* Village. Then, while there was the event, I brought sugar, coffee, and rice. It is because there will be an event by eating together with maintaining good relationship. It has been promised by God that by doing it, we will get 2 grace, long life and additional wealth. It is also what can keep the people from danger "(interview with Abdullah Fauzi, Section Head of Culture Department, May 21, 2018)

In the opinion of the cultural head, *Seblang Olehsari* ritual is good because all of its philosophies are not wrong. However, when *Seblang Olehsari* ritual is considered as shirk, the cultural head does not feel that *Seblang Olehsari* interferes with people's minds and beliefs. People still believe in rituals that are still alive even in the midst of today's modern society (Che, Liu, & Chan, 2006). *Seblang Olehsari* Ritual actually aims to pray for society to avoid distress and bring fertility. The decoration of the *Seblang* ritual stage in *Olehsari* village is filled with earth products and it is as a symbol of gratitude for God's grace. In addition, the village cleaning ritual that became a series of *Seblang* ritual aims to prevent the village from all disease and distress. In principle, the basic attitudes possessed by society are all governed and determined from the 'above' (The God Almighty). This life perspective raises the abstraction formed by the way of thinking and ultimately fosters the guidance developed for life (Hiryanto & Fathiyah, 2013)

The community ritual events are understood as concrete manifestations of the synergy between nature, human being, and plants in relation to the purpose of mutual protection. The giving of offerings aims for living beings to participate in praying for the welfare of the community which shows the good relationship between genie and human being. The rituals performed by the community also teaches how important the tolerance, mutual help, not distinguish the degree of human, sacrifice together, and working together (Permana, Setyowati, Slamet, & Juhadi, 2017).

In the part of *Adol Kembang*, where the perpetrator of Seblang Olehsari sells flowers, it is *Kembang Dermo*. *Dermo* means selling the flowers without any price. The price is determined by the audience who bought the flowers.

“How much? It’s up to you to give, the most important is your sincere. One stitch is three flowers. When it is given one million for it, yeah I feel thankful. The most important is sincere than giving a thousand but it is not sincere.” (Interview with Abdullah Fauzi, Section of Culture Department, May 21, 2018)

Local people believe if you save *Kembang Dermo*, then the desire will be achieved. For example, for a trader, *Kembang Dermo* is placed in a drawer or stall for the seller. While for the unmarried persons, they will get a life partner soon.

Seblang Olehsari ritual is full of philosophical values as well as messages of humanity and the environment. Values in philosophical studies are used to designate abstract nouns which mean goodness, and verbs which mean a certain psychic action in judgment or assessment (Kaelan, 2005). Philosophically, Seblang ritual teaches that although today is a globalization era with technological advances, we should never forget to always maintain the sustainability and balance of nature. That is, there is a logical relationship between human being and nature. If humans maintain the balance of nature, then nature will provide prosperity for humans. However, if man destroys nature, then nature will be angry and man will experience misery. The research (Triyoga, 2001) proves the same thing that people still rely heavily on nature, and it is visible from their local ecological wisdom. From experience and observations gained from generation to generation, the southern slopes of Mount Merapi in their view of life must always be subject to natural laws and they have ‘*nrimo ing pandum*’ attitude (accepting reality as part of life).

Furthermore, the culture formed by human existence and necessity in overcoming nature and environment, developed from prehistoric to historical period (hu-

man civilization with the point since the evidence discovery of human ability to make and know how to write). Culture formed by human existence has a function in overcoming nature and environment to keep the existence of human existence as one of the creatures that exist in the earth (Indrawardana, 2012).

The materials used in *omprog* of Seblang Olehsari’s dancers are various types of flowers. The philosophical meaning is that we should respect the universe and maintain the balance of the environment. Flower is placed on the head, and its philosophical meaning is how important the sustainability and balance of nature that must be considered and implemented together. *Payung Agung*, when the dancers of Seblang Olehsari surround it, is a symbol of protection.

“*Payung Agung* is considered as a symbol that we remember to the Almighty, with this *Payung Agung*, with God’s power, we were created to be like this as the perfect human being.” (Interview with Ansori, Adat Chairman, April 20, 2018)

Osing people in Banyuwangi think about their nature and living environment in a positive way. Human being must take advantage of the great nature given by God as the best and the wisest as possible. The use of nature should balance human life and interaction with other beings, including animals and plants. They also believe that nature as a residence has provided all the benefits especially for the necessities of life, such as irrigating the agriculture. They are really conscious about the strategy of maintaining and utilizing the properties appropriately, not excessively, or just when they need to use them (Sumarmi, 2015).

Local cultural wisdom of Osing community in maintaining the natural environment is done by uniting the belief system, norms, culture, and traditions. This condition has been present in the myth worshiped by people for a very long time. The idea of local wisdom exists as a distinctive knowledge of certain people or cultures that have developed as a result of human interaction with their environment (Sumintarsih & et

al, 2005). All the dance moves in *Seblang Olehsari* ritual symbolize the balance of nature with human being. The property and ritual process of *Seblang* are described in the following Table 1.

Construction of Cultural Resilience

Initially, the cost of implementing *Seblang Olehsari* ritual comes from self-help of society, but when *Seblang Olehsari* became part of the Banyuwangi Festival, there was help from the government. However, the fee is allocated for the performance, not for the welfare of the perpetrators of *Seblang*. The local young generation has very high enthusiasm, even the implementation of *Seblang Olehsari* ritual is supported by youth through Youth Organization and Dancing Club.

Some people suggested that in order not to make the audience get bored, when the dancers of *Seblang Olehsari* finished their dancing and stopped sitting, it is filled with narratives, such as meaning and philosophical explanation. So *Seblang Olehsari* is not only as a ritual and entertainment, but also as a medium of knowledge transfer. *Seblang Olehsari* rituals can survive in the

era of globalization because it is unique and interesting. *Seblang Olehsari* Ritual is not just a tradition, but it is full of science, the teachings of goodness, the symbols of life, the rational relations between man and nature, and as a cultural and social identity. To strengthen cultural and social identity, the government plays a role in protecting and sustaining *Seblang Olehsari* rituals, including all elements of society

Seblang ritual should be maintained its existence as the cultural and social identity in order to realize the cultural resilience. Cultural resilience is capacity from the community or cultural system in order to absorb the disturbance and rearrange it while having changes so that it can defend the key element from the structure and identity in order to keep its uniqueness (Healy, 2006)

Referring to perspectives (Ruslan, 2015), the steps to achieve cultural resilience, among others; First, the ability to maintain a system of adopted cultural values. This has been done by traditional and community leaders in *Olehsari* Village to organize *Seblang* rituals regularly every year with the support of Banyuwangi Local Government through Banyuwangi Festival. The philoso-

Table 1. Philosophical Value of *Seblang* Ritual

<i>Seblang</i> Ritual	Cultural Elements	Philosophical Value of <i>Seblang</i> Olehsari	
Property of Ritual	<i>Omprog</i>	Graceful, beautiful and authoritative, like incarnation of <i>dedari</i> (Dewi Sri)	
	Offerings	<i>Buangan</i>	The danger deterrent so that the ritual goes smoothly and safely
		<i>Kinang</i>	Provision in human life to be calm
		<i>Peras</i>	Be careful to utilize the results of the work
		<i>Poro Bungkil</i>	The produce of the earth as a manifestation of gratitude for the success of farming
	<i>Kembang dermo</i>	Give donations sincerely	
	<i>Payung agung</i>	Shade that protects and takes care of the earth	
Procession of Ritual	Pilgrimage to the ancestor's cemetery	Asking for permission and blessing, as well as respect for the ancestors	
	Sumber penadan	Cleaning the body and purification	
	<i>Slametan</i>	Expression of gratitude and connecting hospitality	
	<i>Adol Kembang</i>	Sharing the luck, safety, and prosperity	
	<i>Ider Bumi</i>	Protecting and taking care of the entire village area from any disaster	

Source: Primary Data, 2018 (processed)



Figure 1. Diagram of *Culture Resilience Strategy*
 Source: Primary Data, 2018 (processed)

phical value of Seblang Olehsari ritual also needs to be internalized through educational media in the form of local content based on local wisdom. The second is people’s ability to adapt to a rapidly changing world. The adaptation of society is manifested by showing Seblang Olehsari ritual in attractive packaging through rebranding efforts based on philosophical value of Seblang Olehsari and publishing Seblang Olehsari book. The third is the integration function of the elements of society. Social integration between elements of society is closely intertwined. Even since these two years, the cultural leaders took the village youths who are members of Youth Organization and dancing club to handle the managerial activities. The fourth is having a common goal and transformed to follow the dynamics of society. The main purpose of Seblang Olehsari ritual is to maintain the harmonization of human being with nature. Therefore, the transformation of Seblang Olehsari ritual could be in the form of more attractive packaging by offering Seblang Olehsari tour packages to domestic and foreign tourists. More clearly, it is presented in the following Figure 1.

CONCLUSION

The philosophical values from Seblang ritual could be categorized based on the ritual property and that property means a sugges-

tion to respect the universe and take care of the balance of environment and nature. Seblang ritual should be maintained as a cultural and social identity in order to achieve cultural resilience. The steps that can be taken to construct cultural resilience from research findings are; First, internalization through educational media in local content based on local wisdom. Second, rebranding cultural tourism based on philosophical values of Seblang and publish Seblang book. The third is cross-sector synergy between village government, traditional leaders, and village youth (Karang Taruna dan Sanggar Tari). Fourth, Seblang’s ritual transformation in attractive packaging and Seblang tour package deals.

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