

Contemporary Bebegig Sukamantri Costume Design

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Abstract. Bebegig Sukamantri developed in several villages in Sukamantri District, Ciamis Regency. There is an agreement to place Dusun Cempaka as the center of Bebegig Sukamantri Buhun which must comply with standard rules, while several villages outside Sukamantri Village can develop for contemporary Bebegig Sukamntri or undergo several changes and developments. The problem of using fibers for Bebegig Sukamantri Buhun's costume obtained a solution by using rasfur cloth which has unique characteristics and is able to support the appearance of the spooky character of Bebegig Sukamantri. Rasfur fabric makes Bebegig Sukamantri's costume easy and comfortable to wear. This Contemporary Bebegig costume can be used for women, teenagers and children, without having to perform mythological rituals as in Bebegig Sukamantri Buhun. The existence of this costume, can overcome the problem of scarcity of fibers, fiber hygiene problems and inconvenience of fiber clothes. This workshop on making costumes from Rasfur provides a new freshness for the village community to develop themselves so that they become more comfortable and productive in their Contemporary Bebegig Sukamantri cultural arts activities.

Keywords: Rasfur fabrics, costumes, carnivals, Bebegig Sukamantri, fashion design

I. INTRODUCTION

Ciamis Regency has several unique *helaran* (carnival) arts. Folk art in the form of *helaran* or parade, is a feature of Sundanese society, which includes *pamayang*, *panyawah* and *pahuma*. The *panyawah* and *pahuma* perform a thanksgiving worship with the harvest of the earth. This carnival art is still preserved today.[1]

The unique *helaran* arts from Ciamis Regency include: *Bebegig Sukamantri*, *Buta Kararas Tilas*, *Wayang Landung*, *Meng-Meong*, and *Mabokuy* (*Manusa boboko* and *dudukuy*). *Bebegig Sukamantri* is growing rapidly in Sukamantri District, very famous in the carnival world because he is able to achieve national and international achievements. The Indonesian government in 2018, designated *Bebegig Sukamantri* as an intangible national heritage.[2] This determination makes *Bebegig Sukamantri* Art an important cultural asset to be preserved for the future.

The dynamics of changing the meaning and function of *Bebegig Sukamantri* started from ancient times until the time of independence. Its initial function was as a warning sign of the boundaries of the Tawang Gantungan Kingdom, in the form of a totem or statue, then evolved into folk carnival art.

Research in 2020 shows that *Bebegig Sukamantri* has developed very significantly, where in 2019, 84 different *Bebegig Sukamantri* mask designs were obtained. From a number of 84 designs, they can be grouped into three groups with different characteristics, namely *Danawa*, the face of Batara Kala with *japamala* decoration, *Detya* who has the face of Batara Kala with a headband of cloth without jewelry and gems, and *Raksasha*, has the face of Batara Kala with a royal crown decoration. [3] These three characters are Sundanese astral beings, which are mentioned in the *Sanghyang Siksa Kanda ing Karesian* script, [4] as *Danawa* the protector of the *Reshis* or clergy, *Detya* the protector of the *Ramas*

community (the people), while *Raksasha* is the protector of the nobles or the *Ratus* group.[5] The *Tritangtu Rama-Resi-Ratu* are the three elements of society in Sundanese cosmology.[6]



Figure 1. Triumvirate of three Sundanese astral beings

The existence of three ancient Sundanese astral beings, which is visualized in the shape and character of *Bebegig Sukamantri's* mask, is basically not realized by the mask makers. In interviews with mask craftsmen, they were not aware of the existence of the three characters. Mask makers usually make face carvings directly without prior planning. In the process of changing the meaning and function of *Bebegig Sukamantri*, the three elements of the character's face mask apparently escaped change.

Bebegig Sukamantri's visualization which has received national and international awards is a natural attribute made from natural materials. Various attributes are obtained from the village forest, such as bush leaves and *ijuk* (palm fiber). The use of *ijuk* fibers as clothing *bebegig*, is quite a challenge because it causes the presence of very concerning problems.

The use of natural materials as an attribute of the carnival is a very creative effort, because it is very efficient in the use of village resources, and only requires a fairly low cost. The ancient Sundanese people saw themselves as the main part of the universe, so that whatever activities the community carried out, basically they always needed closeness to nature.

In the use of natural attributes in *Bebegig Sukamantri*, there are two different assumptions. The first opinion states that natural attributes are intentional to get the uniqueness and distinctiveness of forest product plants owned by the village. Another opinion, is because to have attributes other than natural materials, will require a fairly high cost or because unique materials are not available in the village. For example, in the case of the controversial use of fibers as carnival clothing, it is understood that fibers are very uncomfortable to wear as clothing, but they are still used because there is no other material that resembles the visualization of coarse fur clothes or some kind of skin of wild animals such as wild boars or other wild animals.

The use of fibers as a carnival costume is closely related to *tawasulan* activities, in the form of praying together in the sacred tomb area while preparing raw materials for *bebegig* attributes. This mystical activity is in an effort to guarantee physical and psychological strength in the implementation of the 5-hour carnival by carrying around 80 kg of masks and accessories. This is why *Bebegig Sukamantri* dancers are not just anyone, but are people who are trained and have

very strong physical and psychological abilities. Between *bebegig* dancers, brawls often occur due to uncontrolled movements due to the influence of ancestral spirits possessed.

In the development of the *Bebegig Sukamantri* carnival art, there was a very striking change, where the existence of the *Bebegig* figure in the past was so feared that people tend to avoid it, but nowadays it is an object of spectacle that is approached by the audience. At present, there is a tendency for children and women to participate as *Bebegig Sukamantri* dancers. If you used to have to use traditional music and the distinctive sound of wooden *klotok*, now popular *dangdut* music often accompanies the modern version of the *Bebegig Sukamantri* dance.

II. THE PROBLEM

This study was conducted to find the best solution to the problems that occurred in the *Bebegig Sukamantri* carnival art area. The main problem is the occurrence of differences of opinion regarding changes that may occur in the appearance of *Bebegig Sukamantri* at this time. In the observations made there are several trends, including:

1. The *Bebegig Sukamantri* artist community who lives in Dusun Cempaka of Desa Sukamantri, Sukamantri District, is the center of *Bebegig Sukamantri* conservationists who carry traditional values, thus rejecting any changes related to *Bebegig Sukamantri's* present and future appearance. The problem of using *ijuk* fibers is problematic, is a challenge and a risk that must be faced by dancers. Wearing masks and heavy accessories is a sign that this art is not for just anyone. In the *Bebegig Sukamantri* carnival art, only healthy and strong adult male dancers can do it. Dusun Cempaka is strongly determined to preserve this art, even though it has to carry out some mystical activities that have been preserved since ancient times.
2. Desa Sukamantri in Sukamantri District is the center of the *Bebegig Sukamantri* artists, there are several *Bebegig Sukamantri* art studios which have a large number of members. Members of art studios in Sukamantri Village generally come from other village areas which are spread quite widely. In receiving orders for performances or carnival activities in several places, sometimes conflicts and social jealousy occur because the arrangements are not evenly distributed or just.
3. Desa Cibeureum in Sukamantri District is the center of the quite productive *Bebegig Sukamantri* mask artists. From this area there are many *Bebegig Sukamantri* artists who are trying to develop themselves, including the development of alternative attributes and the appearance of *Bebegig Sukamantri* which is more varied. *Bebegig Sukamantri* for children's, youth and women's versions, is also developing in this area.

Based on these situations and conditions, deliberation efforts were made to obtain the best solution that was beneficial for all parties. Interviews and observations of the attitude and behavior tendencies of the artists are an important step in understanding the psychological aspects of the artists.

In addition to macro problems, there are also micro problems that have the potential to become conflicts and feuds. Include among others:

1. The use of fibers as clothing, causes irritation to the skin because the sharp tip of the fibers acts like a needle that pierces the skin. Some of the *Bebegig Sukamantri* dancers experienced painful rashes.
2. In the attraction of the *Bebegig Sukamantri* dance, the use of *ijuk* fibers that are tied very tightly will hinder the movement of the hands and feet. The pressure is quite hard on some of the joints, causing pain in the joints and joints of the legs.
3. The use of fibers for one use is very much, almost one garment uses fibers from two palm trees. After use, it is immediately discarded, because it cannot be returned or re-applied to the tree body. This single-use use causes a large pile of fibers. Unfortunately, it is no longer used for further activities because the condition of the fibers has

been damaged. The use of a lot of fibers causes a high demand for fibers, so it becomes rare and expensive. Another impact is the damage to the *talun* (village forest), especially the palm trees that grow naturally.

Based on these three problems, the use of palm fiber gets a sharp enough spotlight to evaluate its use in the Bebegig Sukamantri carnival art.



Figure 2. The use of *ijuk* (palm fiber) clothing on Bebegig Sukamantri

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In understanding the problems of using fibers and shrub accessories in *Bebegig Sukamantri*, direct field observations were carried out in several areas in Sukamantri District. These observations include human behavior and the impact of its ecosystem. In social psychology theory, there is a relationship between the human and plant elements, which can be harmoniously interwoven into a mutualistic psychological bond. In the external environment, the structure of mutualism between humans and plants is perfectly interwoven as elements that give and take each other as a harmonious life. To understand this connection, scientific efforts are needed with an ethnographic and phenomenological approach, namely a combination of ethnographic research methodological processes developed by Spradley (1985), Fetterman (1998) and Agar (2006).[7]

The concept of collaborative ethnography in the Product Design process requires ergo-cultural implementation (cultural ergonomics or ergonomics rules in human culture). Ergonomics is an applied science that makes humans the main priority in the design process of a product, while culture is the content of civilization that develops in accordance

with the direction of intelligence, wisdom and the ability to adapt to environmental changes. As shown in the following scheme of research approach:

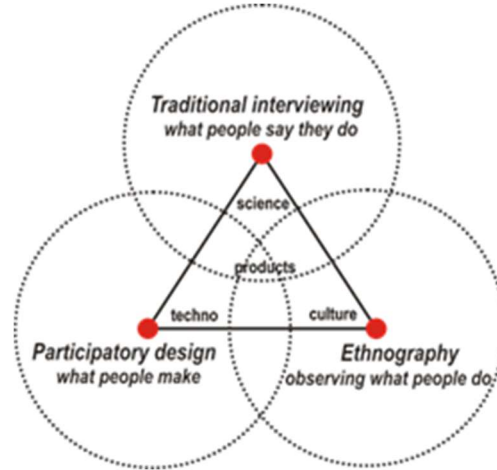


Figure 3. Schematic of the concept of ethnographic and ergo-cultural studies

IV. DISCUSSION AND SOLUTIONS

The very sharp opposition between the Bebegig Sukamantri artists regarding the use of fibers, found a solution to the agreement between the artists, by making Dusun Cempaka of Sukamantri Village, Sukamantri District the center of Bebegig Sukamantri who maintains the tradition of using palm fiber clothing, which is called Bebegig Sukamantri Buhun, where the values of Bebegig Sukamantri traditional and mythological values are still maintained to maintain its authenticity. Meanwhile, several hamlets and villages outside Sukamantri Village are allowed to develop Bebegig Sukamantri for the splendor of the carnival. Thus, there are two groups of Bebegig Sukamantri, namely bebegig buhun and contemporary.

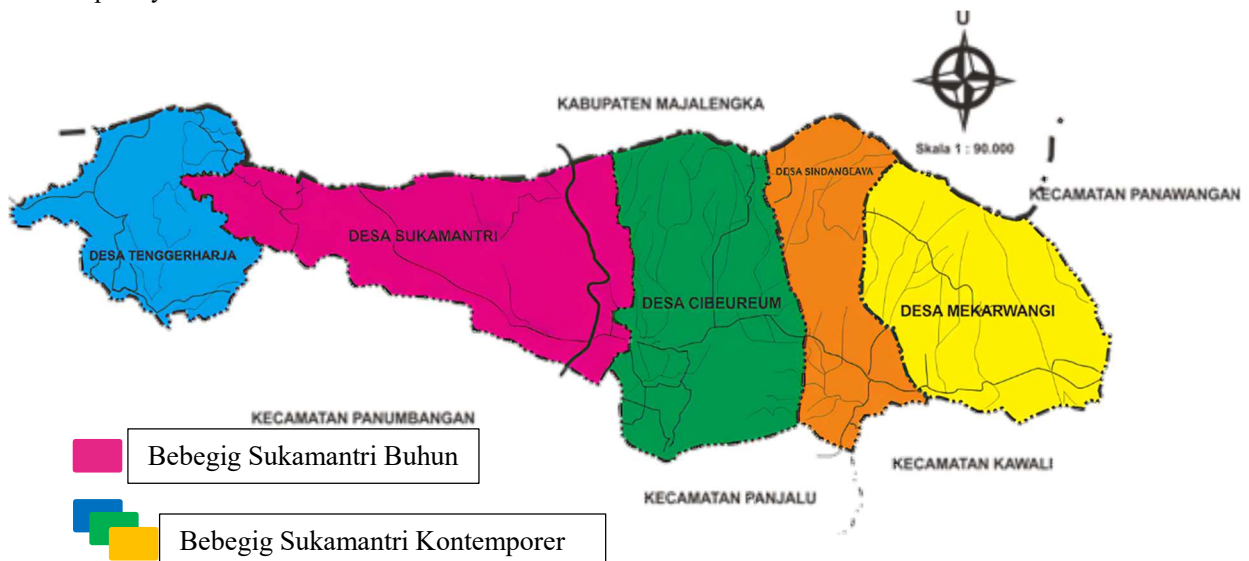


Figure 4 Bebegig Sukamantri center zone

The concept of change and development in contemporary *Bebegig Sukamantri* includes various aspects related to the efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of artists, especially in terms of achieving comfort when carrying out

activities. There is also the emergence of the need for the *Bebegig Sukamantri* attribute for women and children, which so far has never existed.

In achieving carnival comfort, the problem of palm fiber which hurts the body can be replaced with a type of fabric that has unique visual aspects such as wild animal fur or other features that display a spooky effect. This type of fabric is called *rasfur*, which is produced in Indonesia for use as a carpet and upholstery material for furniture upholstery.

The use of palm fiber is a manifestation of the appearance of a wild creature that is feared by residents in mountainous areas, which is likely derived from the figures of tigers, bears, wolves, wild boars or great apes that used to live in mountainous areas in West Java. The idea of using *rasfur* cloth is in an effort to approach visualization that is relevant to the effect displayed by the palm fiber rolls.



Fig 5 Some examples of *rasfur* fabric patterns

The use of *rasfur* cloth can display optimal visualization effects with quite high efficiency because this cloth is durable, easy to clean and can be shaped like clothes in general.



Fig 6 Some examples of costumes from *rasfur* materials

The uniqueness of Rasfur cloth is that it can be washed and sewn using a special sewing machine for dolls or shoes. Rasfur fabric can also be attached to the surface of sneakers to make it a unique fur shoe, it can also be glued to ordinary jackets to become a thick fur jacket.

V. SUGGESTION

The *Bebegig Sukamantri* Art preservation program can be carried out optimally based on the strong determination of the artists in the Dusun Cempaka area as the *Bebegig Sukamantri Buhun* center, which upholds traditional values, so that its authenticity and uniqueness is very well maintained. Meanwhile, the *Bebegig Sukamantri* development program towards more productive, comfortable and efficient performing arts can be developed by the *Bebegig Sukamantri* artist community in various other villages in the Sukamantri District area. This is like the inner Baduy area which is sterile, and is always accompanied by the Outer Baduy area which is adaptive to change and development.

The existence of carnival costumes made of rasfur cloth is able to show the characteristics of *Bebegig Sukamantri* which are fierce and scary. The creation of a variety of costumes that are not limited, can also provide superior creative nuances while increasing the quality of comfort for the wearer. For development in the *Bebegig Sukamantri Buhun* area, it can continue to foster generations young artists, so that this tradition can be passed on to the next generation. To improve the quality of palm fiber costumes, knowledge is needed in processing palm fiber into materials that are usable or available in large quantities based on efforts to cultivate palm trees in village forest areas.

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