



The Transformation Form of *Begawai* Dance in the Cooking Ceremony Phenomenon at *Gawai* Ceremony of *Talang Mamak*

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Abstract

The *Gawai* Ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe includes various communal practices that are considered mandatory by the community based on their traditional rules and beliefs. In the ceremony, the phenomenon of women's cooking inspired a dance work entitled "*Begawai*." Unfortunately, the creative process transformed cultural practices into dance, resulting in the loss of their original cultural identity. This study aims to describe 1) the *Gawai* ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe, 2) the transformation of the phenomenon in the *Gawai* ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe into the *Begawai* dance, and 3) the results of the creative process in the *Begawai* dance. This study uses a descriptive-qualitative methodology with a semiotic approach. The results showed that 1) the series of *Gawai* ceremonies consisted of *Melekat Janji*, *Petang Mendaun*, *Menggantung Pauh-Pauh*, *Bunga Adat*/dowry, Wedding Ceremony, *Makan Beradat*, *Tiang Gelanggang*, *Mengadu Ayam*, *Acara Menyembang*, and *Ditegur Diajar*. 2) In the *Begawai* dance, three transformation parts are identified: cockfighting, cooking, and traditional eating. 3) The creative process produced visuals: the cockfighting arena, cooking location, and the traditional dining atmosphere. The choreographer's creative imagination inspired by cooking activities creates movements such as cutting, cleaning, scooping, stirring, and bridging food. This research implies that the transformation experiences empirical gaps in cultural practices with a distinctive identity, so changing into a form of artistic activity in the creative process causes the loss of its cultural identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Talang Mamak tribe is one of the tribes living in the Indragiri Hulu Regency, Riau, Indonesia. It has maintained diverse cultural traditions, especially in ritual ceremonies that are strictly adhered to based on its belief system. The people of the Talang Mamak tribe are very obedient to the customs they believe in and hold firmly to their customs and traditions [1]. Its obedience can be seen in the way of life of its people by carrying out ceremonies based on beliefs in their activities. The implementation of the activities of the Talang Mamak tribe can be interpreted as being passed down from generation to generation as a custom that its people should obey because customary rules have been established in their daily lives [2]. So, for the Talang Mamak tribe, all customs-related activities have become rituals because their behavior and actions are bound by the rules they believe in.

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Rituals in the Talang Mamak tribe are more than just traditions; society functions as a means to strengthen cultural identity and communal ties. Durkheim said that without a culture that gives rise to and shapes thoughts, behaviors, and personalities, then nothing will emerge in today's life, especially tradition as a cultural identity [3]. So, the cultural identity owned by the Talang Mamak tribe is certainly relevant to the theory because the activities of the Talang Mamak tribe come from everyday thoughts and behavior and are deeply rooted in their belief system. Until now, all activities of the Talang Mamak tribe involve ceremonies or rituals with a very diverse number of people, one of which is the wedding ceremony (Gawai). The ceremony includes various communal practices that are considered by the Talang Mamak tribe to be mandatory based on the rules they believe in, including Melekat Janji, Sabung Ayam, Memasak, Tiang Gelanggang, and Makan Beradat.

Based on the cultural practices above, a dance entitled "Begawai" emerged, a form or depiction of the Gawai ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe. However, it focuses on a group of women cooking together. In addition to resembling cooking activities in the dance, there are several customs in the cultural practices of the Gawai ceremony, namely Sabung Ayam and Makan Beradat. The dance is present because the Indragiri arts community created it in a cultural promotion event or cultural diplomacy to show the existence of the Talang Mamak tribe's culture by creating an art performance.

Departing from the Begawai dance, which contains a series of customs such as Sabung Ayam, Memasak, and Makan Beradat, a series of customs that have become part of the beliefs of the Talang Mamak tribe and must be carried out in the Gawai ceremony is cockfighting. The Talang Mamak tribe believes that Sabung Ayam must be carried out at every Gawai ceremony, and chickens must always be involved in other traditional ritual activities. Turner argues that ritual performances function as "social dramas" that shape and reaffirm collective identity [4]. So, this Sabung Ayam has become the identity of the Talang Mamak tribe in carrying out the ritual ceremonies that they have and clearly explains that this custom is the identity of the Talang Mamak tribe, for example in healing ceremonies, chickens are used as ayam pesambah are confronted to Kumantan. Rice will be given, and then the chicken will peck at it, indicating the healing ceremony can occur [5]. In addition, the death ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe involves Sabung Ayam, and the blood of the lost chickens will be used for the ceremony. The Talang Mamak tribe believes that chickens are a requirement for the continuation of the ceremony and are considered important by their Traditional Leader. That is how important the role of chickens is in the beliefs of the Talang Mamak tribe, so Sabung Ayam must be done and become their identity. In addition to the Talang Mamak tribe, the Dayak tribe also involves chickens in one of their rituals, namely when opening a field in Bukit Raya by asking permission from the spirits and closing it by planting a stone into the tugalan hole and then slaughtering the chicken above the hole [6].

Sabung Ayam means a fight between two chickens; the traditional leader said they had to go through stages such as getting permission from the inner being, the tribal leader. The Talang Mamak community gives symbolic meaning to cockfighting regarding spiritual or ritual ceremonies, and this tradition is not just entertainment but part of a belief system that is passed down from generation to generation and is prepared through cooperation [7]. So, with permission from the traditional leader, cockfighting as a means of entertainment for the community can be carried out in a series of customs, maintaining the heritage continuously, and also cannot be done carelessly in activities other than the traditional events they believe in. However, this Sabung Ayam is used as one part of the scene in the Begawai dance, whose cultural practices are seen from the naked eye are not entirely identical to the original activities, so in conveying the Sabung Ayam customs of the Talang Mamak tribe in the dance, it creates an empirical gap in understanding the identity of the Sabung Ayam phenomenon.

Furthermore, in the communal practice of Sabung Ayam, the results of interviews with the Talang Mamak tribe said that the chicken that lost the fight became the main menu in the Gawai ceremony and became a donation or gift from the community as well as a prayer of hope for the newlyweds and an additional menu to accompany the main menu. Similar things also occur in the Pawiwahan ceremony of Tububeneng Village, which considers special food or dishes to be prepared and considered sacred and symbolizes prayers for newlyweds [8]. By preparing the main menu as a form of giving and prayer, the traditional eating activities carried out in the Gawai ceremony can be carried out. However, the Begawai dance also does not show the full meaning of traditional cooking and eating activities, thus creating a gap in understanding the identity of traditional cooking and eating activities.

There is a change in the activity of the Gawai ceremony into a dance performance in the Begawai dance. The change from a cultural phenomenon or practice to a dance performance form is a transformation, namely a formation carried out in a different or new direction without changing its structure, even though the results of the new form have changed [9]. Sumaryono also said this transformation means moving from one form to another beyond changing physical appearance to new elements [10]. However, when the phenomenon of the Gawai ceremony, which has several cultural practices with a distinctive identity, is adapted into an artistic performance, its meaning can shift. So, the transformation of the phenomenon in the Gawai ceremony into the Begawai dance experiences a change from a form that involves dance elements and produces novelty in form. To promote culture, it is unfortunate that changing from a cultural practice that shows its original identity into a dance performance becomes an artistic activity and role. Another thing is that due to human development, transformation involves changes in the ego, mind, and body structure, with the content of life experiences showing changing forms [11]. So, researchers found that the choreographer carried out a creative process of transferring forms.

The creative process is individual, where personal freedom is released or expressed based on experience and does not require the justification of others [12]. According to Webster's dictionary, creative thinking is "the ability to bring something of the new existence," which shows that creativity can realize something new. [13]. The creative process is conceptually an optimal experience that refers to the sensation or feeling that arises in an individual who carries out an activity [14]. Creativity in dance plays a role in encouraging individuals to think about realizing things, starting from the growth process with the discovery of the composer's feelings by the idea so that it can be realized [15].

Based on the explanation above, this study examines the changes in the distinctive identity that exists in the Gawai ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe, especially the cultural practice of cooking in the ceremony, which is transformed into a dance performance known as the Begawai dance. Little attention is paid to how everyday cultural practices are reinterpreted in artistic expression. For this reason, this study uses semiotic theory to read the forms of transformation that exist in the Begawai dance. Semiotic theory is used because semiotics is the science of communicated signs or symbols and is very commonly used in the study of performing arts. Moreover, it functions as a theory in understanding how meaning is created or communicated through symbols in building an art event [16]. A semiotic approach was used to analyze the gap and meaning development in the transformation of the Begawai dance. This study highlighted the symbolism of movement in Begawai dance to represent the cooking tradition.

Based on the transformation of the phenomenon of communal cooking, Sabung Ayam, and traditional eating in the Gawai ceremony, which is an important part of cultural practice, it was transformed into the Begawai dance by artists in promoting culture or cultural diplomacy which resulted in a shift in cultural form and identity in the creative process of artists. So, the research problem formulation 1) How does the identity of cultural practices

in the Gawai ceremony in the Talang Mamak Tribe? 2) What forms of transformation occur in the Begawai dance? Moreover, 3) What are the results of the creative process in the Begawai dance? The three questions above need to be proven further to understand in detail the phenomenon of the Gawai Suku Talang Mamak ceremony and then be able to study more about the meaning of being maintained, changed, or reinterpreted in the performance.

2. METHODS

Research methods are scientific methods used to obtain data for specific purposes and uses, and one is done empirically or by observing with human senses so that other people can observe and know the methods used [17]. This research uses qualitative research, which refers to concepts, definitions, and explanations of everything [18]. This research uses a descriptive method to study the phenomenon in the *Gawai* ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe and uses a semiotic approach to the *Begawai* dance. Descriptive research is a method that describes something by providing descriptions, explanations, and explanations about the phenomena being studied [19]. Descriptive qualitative research uses qualitative data to analyze events, phenomena, or social conditions without relying on numerical or statistical measurements [20]. Through descriptive qualitative methods, this study can describe social events or phenomena in the *Gawai* ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe.

A semiotic approach was used to study the *Begawai* dance because semiotics is a branch of the science of signs that comes from the word semiotics [21]. Through a semiotic study using Pierce's triadic theory, related to representamen (something that represents another form that is received by a sign or functions as a sign), object (something that is represented or that exists in mind), and interpretant (a person's interpretation of the sign or the meaning of the sign) [22], so researchers can represent by understanding and seeing the visual of *Begawai* dance, then think about how it is represented until it produces an interpretation from the researcher. Through the researcher's reasoning in understanding the meaning displayed, the process of representamen, object, and interpretant occurs, producing results as expressions, descriptions, and translations of the meaning studied in the form of movement, props, and audiovisuals in *Begawai* dance.

This research was conducted to observe and understand the transformation of *Begawai* dance using the sense of sight referring to the concept or presentation of *Begawai* dance, then presented in text form. Qualitative research data is data that is present/expressed in the form of words, narrative expressions, sentences, and images [17]. Data sources were obtained by reviewing internal and external data and developing data collection techniques through direct observation or observation of the *Gawai* ceremony in the Talang Mamak tribe and the *Begawai* dance performance with the help of video recording documentation data to examine the details of the form. Then, the data source through interviews with informants, namely Indra as a choreographer; Roma as a composer; Rahma, Silvi, and Leni as dancers; Jamin as a Traditional Figure of the Talang Mamak tribe; Rena and Devi as the Talang Mamak tribe community; and Saharan as an Indragiri Cultural Figure. Furthermore, documentation from a collection of videos, photos, and other document files was obtained from several informants.

According to Miles and Huberman, data analysis uses three stages: reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions, which are then concluded and verified [23]. Data analysis is carried out by searching for and systematically arranging data obtained from interview results, observation results, and documentation, grouping the data into categories, and then drawing conclusions [23]. The analysis involves selecting, searching for, and categorizing the data to obtain new descriptive understanding and findings [17]. This study uses triangulation techniques to confirm the findings by strengthening the data sources

(observation, interviews, and documentation) and analyzing them using verified Miles and Huberman.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Talang Mamak Tribe Wedding Ceremony

Traditional ceremonies are brief activities that are adhered to by local communities and are related to beliefs or convictions with certain goals and purposes. In addition, ceremonies are carried out from generation to generation in an area. They are a form of community behavior that shows awareness of the past regarding the origins of figures, objects, natural events, and others [24]. The ceremonial activities have very diverse purposes, one of which is an expression of gratitude for all the blessings by the Sundanese people in the Bakti Purnamasari traditional ceremony, the implementation of which is rational and sacred [25]. There is even a purpose for the ceremony to commemorate one of the figures of the people of the west coast of Sumatra, whose followers believe in the presence of God's creation and the development of Islam during the ceremony [26]. The goals are carried out by a group of people who perform ceremonies; the Talang Mamak tribe also has traditional ceremonies, including a wedding ceremony.

Talang Mamak tribe wedding ceremony, tribal people usually call this ceremony *Gawai*. The *Gawai* in question is a party, and the term *Gawai* is often mentioned during wedding customs of the Talang Mamak tribe. The customs of the Talang Mamak tribe are based on a matrilineal kinship system, which is reflected in marriage customs where the woman picks up the man, and the stages carried out include flirting/*Main Mata*, *Betandang*, *Membibit*, counseling/*Menyuluh*, picking up, proposing, and marriage [5].

The flirting period is when men and women look at each other. If they are interested, they will learn about the man or woman, such as which village they come from, whether from the same village or the next village [5]. *Betandang* is the initial stage which is called the introductory stage [27]; this stage is carried out by the man coming to the woman's house at night by throwing soil, small stones, fruit, or tree branches onto the roof of the house so that the girl in the house who is sleeping will be woken up by her parents who then meet the man (young man). If he agrees with the family's permission, the girl takes the man to the house to stay overnight until 5 in the morning [5]. Next, *Membibit*, the harmony between two young people who love each other, the boy *Membibit* to the girl by expressing his love, and giving one of the things to the girl in the form of a headband, clothes, or something he owns [5]. This stage of *Membibit* is the same as the engagement carried out by the general public in Indonesia, namely giving a ring as a dowry or symbol of binding.

Another example is Saudi Arabia, which requires the groom to present a dowry, engagement ring, and bridal jewelry that has been arranged and decorated beautifully [28]. Murphy then said that Japanese culture does not require the man to give a ring during an engagement but rather to give a gift to seal the contract (a symbol of binding) [29]. So, *Membibit* is concluded as giving gifts to women as a symbol of bonding and love.

Next, in the *Menyuluh* stage, the female heirs gather to decide that one of them will visit the male parents' house to ask for the male heirs' willingness to accept the female heir [5]. Then, in the pick-up stage, the girl's heir comes to pick up the boy because he has given birth to his girl and ends with handing over the *keris* to the girl's heir (a legal sign of marriage) and is ready to carry out the *Gawai*. In the final stage (proposal), both parties consult with each other to determine its implementation on the day, date, and month.

All the stages mentioned above are done before *Gawai* begins, starting from *Betandang*, or the introduction of both families to the proposal stage, with the determination of the

implementation of the wedding party and the size of *Gawai* according to the ability of both parties. *Gawai* is divided into three levels, namely *gawe besar* (3 days), *gawe tengah* (2 days), and *gawe kecil* (1 day) [5]. Then, after the initial series is carried out before starting *Gawai*, in the *Gawai* ceremony stages, there are a series of customs that need to be carried out as follows [5].

- a. *Melekat Janji*: In the *Melekat Janji* tradition, this is a form of notification to the *Batin* regarding the holding of *Gawai*, determining the day of implementation, approved by the *Batin*, and inviting the *Batin*, *Monti* (Representative), and *Pemangku*.
- b. *Petang Mendaun*: The *Petang Mendaun* tradition is a series of traditions where mothers and other workers in the female hall start cooking rice and stroking leaves.
- c. *Menggantung Pauh-Pauh*: the traditional series of *mencacakkan lembing* or keris on a Tuha pole by the *Batin* and tied with a white cloth (a sign that *Gawai* can be started and a stake is appointed that supervises all party events).
- d. *Bunga Adat/Dowry*: This traditional flower is a form of dowry whose amount will be determined by the male and female heirs.
- e. *Upacara Nikah/Marriage Ceremony*: the implementation of the ceremony can be started by a marriage official, usually from a *Batin* or *Monti*.
- f. *Makan Beradat*: The traditional meal is in line with the event of drinking *Pengasih* water, which takes place in the evening. This traditional meal starts with *Batin*, *Monti*, *Pemangku*, *Kumantan* (clever people), and *Tuha* (traditional rulers), along with their male or female heirs, eating together where the food is on a *poho* or tray.
- g. *Tiang Gelanggang*: made using bamboo wrapped in black and white cloth, usually when the arena pole is called a big tradition or the peak of the *Gawai* wedding ceremony.
- h. *Mengadu Ayam*: All kinds of gambling that exist when *Gawai* is called traditional gambling. Traditional gambling is a type of *Sabung Ayam* game, and *Sabung Ayam* is traditional fighting.
- i. *Menyembang Event*: The bride and groom worship the male/female parents, *Batin*, *Monti*, *Pemangku*, and *Tuha-Tuha*.
- j. *Ditegur Diajar*: *Batin* gives the bride and groom direction and guidance so that they are good at socializing, upholding customs, having good manners, understanding each other, loving each other, respecting parents, *Pemangkuh*, *Tuha-Tuha*, and other things.

The series of customs carried out by the Talang Mamak tribe described above is a series of customs that must not be abandoned. This must not be abandoned because the series in the *Gawai* ceremony depicts social values that strongly reflect the identity of the Talang Mamak tribe. Social values include cooperation, mutual assistance, harmony, affection, and concern for others [30]. The series of *Gawai* ceremonies shows the value of cooperation between traditional leaders and other traditional leaders, helping each other in the community by erecting arena poles, and the form of concern for others reflects the obedience of the Talang Mamak tribal community in carrying out all cultural practices so that their traditions continue to be maintained.

The interesting thing about the customary stages carried out is that there are customs quite different from those of other traditional tribes. The existence of the upright *Tiang Gelanggang* as the peak of *Gawai* and gambling games or Customary Gambling, which are carried out and monitored by *Pancang*, has been determined before *Gawai* begins. *Pancang* monitors all games or gambling, which consists of 2 people, namely male or female heirs [5]. Then, it ends with *Ditegur Diajar*, so the mind gets good guidance and direction. Among the customs carried out, there is the phenomenon of cooperation carried out by women in the backyard.

3.2. Forms of Transformation in *Begawai* Dance

The dance work entitled *Begawai* is taken from the word *Gawai*, which means a party in the Talang Mamak Tribe, with the addition of the initial "be" so that it is combined into the word *Begawai*, which means to party. So, from the title given, it is very clear that this dance work is part of the Talang Mamak tribe's wedding customs. This *Begawai* dance is one of the new creative works of seven female dancers in 2021. The dance was created to introduce the culture in Riau, namely the culture of the Talang Mamak tribe. An artist from Rengat created this creative dance work as the choreographer and his partner as the music arranger. The two of them collaborated to create the creative dance work to appear in cultural promotions in D.I Yogyakarta with the agenda of the Silk Scarf Ethnic Cultural Event on October 5, 2021.

The *Begawai* dance work is a form of creation or depiction of the *Gawai* event in the Talang Mamak tribe, where the depiction of the *Gawai* ceremony has shifted from its original phenomenon to a dance performance. This change is said to be a transformation because it is needed to preserve the culture carried out by artists in cultural diplomacy at the 2021 Selendang Sutra Ethnic Cultural Event. As previously stated, transformation involves changes in the ego and mind [11], and the goal carried out by the artist is to make a change in form. It is known that transformation is a form or result of a process of change carried out from one form to another; it can be said that changes occur with dynamic conditions and produce new forms [31]. Then, Sander said that the concept of transformation is a form of action of change and metamorphosis, as stated that this metamorphosis is a shift in form or initial composition which is adapted, rewritten, or retold across cultures and generations [32]. However, transformation means there is a change in form, meaning, and the message contained in the new form will remain the same [33]. So, it is concluded that transformation is the process of changing one form into another, which is adapted, rewritten, or conveyed again in a new form and has the same meaning and significance as the original form.

Based on the synopsis of the *Begawai* dance, it is stated that: "The dance work entitled *Begawai* is taken from the word *Gawai*, which is a party custom in the Talang Mamak tribe, with the addition of the initial "be" so that it is combined into the word *Begawai* which means party. This dance is a transformation of the phenomenon or party activity that exists in the tribal community of Talang Mamak Kab. Indragiri Hulu, Riau is a cook at a wedding ceremony. This *Begawai* dance work tells of several customs carried out by the Talang Mamak tribe community, while the series of wedding customs of the Talang Mamak tribe in this *Begawai* dance are cockfighting and traditional eating. Between these two customs, there is the phenomenon of the Talang Mamak tribe people cooking in their backyard, which is the focus of this *Begawai* dance work".

This *Begawai* dance work mainly focuses on telling the phenomenon of cooking at the *Gawai* ceremony, then describes two customs carried out by the Talang Mamak tribal community. The series of wedding customs of the Talang Mamak tribe in the *Begawai* dance are cockfighting and traditional eating. Traditional games such as *Sabung Ayam* are one of the traditional gambling games at the *Gawai* wedding ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe [5]. This customary gambling has become a belief of the Talang Mamak tribe always to carry out

this custom. We know that gambling is very bad in terms of other beliefs, but in the Talang Mamak tribe, it is a custom that becomes a belief so that they obey to carry out this gambling. There is a saying related to this *Sabung Ayam* custom, namely, "*Ke rakyat sudah kitalah, alahlah berbayarkan, menanglah diterimakan oleh Batin, Monti, Mangku Rakyat*". The statement states that all kinds of gambling in *Gawai* are called Customary Gambling.

Men in the front yard of the house carry out traditional gambling (*Sabung Ayam*). During this *Sabung Ayam*, there is a phenomenon or incident of mothers/*Amai-Amai* (groups of women) working together to cook in the house's backyard. The activity carried out by the group is to prepare food to be eaten together on the day of the *Gawai* wedding ceremony, and one of the customs involved in eating together is the traditional meal. Traditional eating is done when *Batin, Monti, Pemangku, Kumantan, Dukun, and Tuha*, together with the male and female heirs, eat from *juadah* on a *poho* or tray [5]. This traditional eating activity usually coincides with the procession of drinking water of mercy.

The transformation of the cooking phenomenon during the *Gawai* ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe's wedding into the *Begawai* dance is described based on the information found and divided into three parts. The findings are studied using semiotics or logic, which is interpreted as the science of studying how people reason according to Pirece's basic theory, with signs that allow for thinking in terms of meaning displayed [15]. Meaning is a message you want to convey; the display of meaning and message involves all forms of treatment and the context of its manifestation [16]. The researcher, as an interpreter, conveys the subjectively interpreted meaning of the three parts of the transformation in the *Begawai* dance that was found. This division makes it easier to find out the changes in form that occur in the original phenomenon in the dance performance. The parts are concluded as follows: *Sabung Ayam*, cooking, and *Makan Beradat*.

a. *Sabung Ayam*

Sabung Ayam during the *Gawai* wedding ceremony is carried out by the men of the Talang Mamak tribe; specifically, those who have fighting cocks can participate in the continuation of this tradition. The phenomenon of *Sabung Ayam* can be seen in Figure 1. Almost all men are enlivening the *Sabung Ayam* arena. The Talang Mamak tribe said that *Sabung Ayam* is one of the requirements for the wedding ceremony. If it is not carried out, the marriage is not considered valid by the *Batin* and *Pancang*, who oversee all customary gambling.



Figure 1. Men Fight Cockfighting in the Open Yard in Front of the House.
[Source: Rian Photo Collection, 2024]

In the *Begawai* dance for the cockfighting section, a representation of the event or atmosphere of cockfighting is found. This can be seen in hand movements forming the flapping of chicken wings and the visual form of five dancers sitting in a box at the ends of the stage facing the two dancers in the middle. The movements of the two dancers in the

middle visualize the fighting movement with the hand movements of the two dancers full of power meeting each other to form a cross and the foot movements kicking, just like two fighting cocks in the fighting arena that continue to compete in strength, gripping each other. The five dancers form a box like a fighting arena because the positions of the five dancers are still and not moving. Then, it is reinforced by the lyrics or expressions in the music: “*Ayam kau berape? Seratos?*” “*haa dueatos berani ni?*” “*Berani!*” indicates the existence of a bet on the amount of money being wagered and, in addition, looks at the response of the audience clapping their hands, adding to the boisterous atmosphere of the *Sabung Ayam* scene in the *Begawai* dance. So it is concluded that something visualized (object) is as if it were the activity of a chicken fighting in the *Sabung Ayam* arena. From the representament and object results, it is interpreted (interpretant) that the form of transformation of the *Sabung Ayam* phenomenon in the *Begawai* dance. The change in the form of cultural practice to the form of artistic performance in *Sabung Ayam* is not entirely similar. In cultural practice, real chickens are the media for fighting, while in artistic performances, humans play them as if they were chickens. Then, not only are the chickens being fought, but there are no four roles of society in carrying out this *Sabung Ayam* ceremony so that it runs properly. Even the visual of the money being wagered does not appear in the *Begawai* dance. So, in the *Begawai* dance, the original traditional values in its cultural practice are slightly removed, but the meaning and purpose are still the same in conveying the original phenomenon. More details can be seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Two Dancers in the Middle Depict Fighting Cocks and Five Other Dancers Form a Fighting Arena.

[Source: Documentation of the *Begawai* Dance when Performing at *Gelar Budaya Etnis Selendang Sutra* 2021]

b. Cooking Activity

This cooking activity is a phenomenon that is often found at any wedding ceremony. Cooking activities in wedding ceremonies carried out by groups of women are considered a form of strong social cohesion because they strengthen social ties, build identity, and strengthen awareness of the needs and preferences of the community. This action is a form of awareness, concern, and cooperation, which are multifaceted concepts that refer to the willingness of community members to work together for mutual benefit [34]. It encompasses shared identities, values, and norms, thus involving processes that influence social networks [35]. Cooking activities for the Talang Mamak tribe play an important role for women because the Talang Mamak tribe still pays attention to gender roles in traditional activities. This is also reinforced by the results of observations during the *Gawai* ceremony, and there is a special hall for men in front of the yard and a special hall for women behind the house. Each hall has been given its tasks so that the *Gawai* ceremony runs smoothly, including the men's hall for cockfighting the arena pole and the women's hall for cooking and preparing dishes. Cooking requires close cooperation for the Talang Mamak tribe; they divide the

tasks, some prepare spices and cooking utensils, and some ensure that the food is ready to be served.

Cooking activities for women in the *Gawai* ceremony have become a tradition for the Talang Mamak tribe and certain groups of people, such as kenduri events and rewang traditions in Javanese society. In the kenduri tradition, one of the women's duties in the Sko kenduri tradition, conveyed by Hardi, is to cook dishes that will be served at activities for the incumbent customary leaders [36]. Then, this rewang focuses on community cooperation in providing food during the wedding event, not only during the event, but also before the event day begins [37]. The Kenduri and Rewang activities are the same as those carried out by the Talang Mamak tribe during the *Gawai* wedding ceremony, working together among groups of women to prepare dishes before and during the wedding day. This includes a form of cooperation and a form of awareness or concern so that it can strengthen the sense of community. Other things will also create a sense of well-being for people who will eat the dishes they cook. Then, seen from the cooking activities during the *Gawai* wedding ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe, they still use tools and materials that are the result of gardens and forest nature, such as wood, to get a source of fire, and there are several long sticks used to stir the cooking, more clearly can be seen in Figure 3. In addition, the Talang Mamak tribe women's group will cook one of the dishes using the main ingredient, namely chicken from a losing fighting cock.



Figure 3. Women Cooking in the Backyard of the House.
[Source: Rian Photo Collection, 2024]

In the *Begawai* dance, the cooking part is found to be a representation of the collaborative event. There is a visual form of two dancers in the back position with props arranged neatly, such as a large cooking vessel and underneath several long pieces of cloth, as well as props of the cloth used to form the roof of the house in the front position. The movements of the two dancers are carried out alternately, such as stirring food in a container with the help of a cloth, which is thought to be like a stirrer, and the fanning and blowing movements are like making sure the fire stays lit. So, this shows that the incident was a form of cooperation for the common good. Furthermore, the fabric's properties that form the roof show the position of the two dancers in the back position. Then it is also supported by lyrics or dialogue in the music "*ha ayam lah ade apelagi tak dimasak?*" "*haa comlah kite masak*" signifies that the chicken that lost the fight is ready to be the main ingredient for cooking in the *Gawai* ceremony. Next, two dancers with lace levels in front of them have cloth properties resembling the roof of a house, as if it looked like the intention of conveying that the chicken had lost.

From the above representation, the object resembles a frying pan or cauldron on a pile of firewood. The placement of the cooking location is behind the yard, things that are done in cooking activities carried out by women, the condition of cooking activities at the *Gawai*

ceremony in the women's hall (behind the house), two chickens lost the fight in the front position which proves that the activity is in front of the house with a male voice saying that there are chickens ready to be cooked. The object conveyed above, reinforced by the choreographer, said that in this scene, there are two different locations: the back for the women's group and the front for the men's group. It clearly says, "*The women's place is depicted as a cooking area and two dancers, while the men's place is depicted as a roof and in front of it are two dancers covering their heads with props that are likened to chickens that have lost a fight*".

Based on the expression of the results of the representament and object, it is interpreted (interpretant) that it is a form of transformation of the conditions of the *Gawai* ceremony, which contains the placement of the cooking activity area. So, the change in form can be interpreted as the actual condition. It is clear to see in Figure 4. The place of the song lyrics in the *Begawai* dance supports and strengthens the interpretation of the transformation of cooking activities in the *Gawai* ceremony, such as: "*dalam perigi air ditimbe, nasi ditanak laok bebasak, Gawai Begawai sibuk dibangsal, nyenangkan hati orang yang datang*". The lyrics also convey that the group of women are busy cooking in the *bangsal* (*balai*), but the use of the word *bangsal* is confusing in determining cultural identity because the results of the interview stated that the term *bangsal* is a place/area for cooking for the Malay community. So the use of the word *bangsal* in the *Begawai* dance reduces the cultural identity of the Talang Mamak tribe.



Figure 4. Two Dancers on the Back Left of the Photo Depicting the Cooking Phenomenon.

[Source: Documentation of *Begawai* Dance when Performing at *Gelar Budaya Etnis Selendang Sutra* 2021]

After the scene above, then there are movements in the *Begawai* dance that are considered similar to the activities carried out by *Amai-Amai*. The movements found are counting two times eight on the movement of the palms of the hands towards the floor (representament), like preparing ingredients (object). The movement of the hands hitting the floor (representament) sounds like a knife cutting ingredients on a cutting board (object). One time eight next, there is a movement of cleaning hands (representament), which depicts that the *Amai-Amai* has finished peeling, cutting, and cleaning the ingredients. So, it is concluded again that the movement is an interpretant of the form of transformation of the *Amai-Amai*'s activities processing food ingredients. Then the movement uses properties on the count of one time eight with the position on top of the prop directed from the bottom to the front, which is then pulled and swung to the right to the left (representament) like scooping or taking water from various directions (object), so it is concluded that the movement is an activity in collecting the water sources needed. The changes made make the form lose the meaning of its original cultural practices because it has been packaged with dance elements in demonstrating cooking activities.

In addition, there are musical lyrics that are sung before the scene appears, namely: “*yang jauh pun dah datang, yang dekat pun dah tiba, yang tue keh yang mude, semua di bangsal semue bekeje*”. “*yang air dah di jerang, yang nasi dah di tanak, yang ayam dah di gulai, semua di bangsal kite Begawai*”. The lyrics show that many people carry out cooking activities. When all the dishes have been made, it is indicated that the water has been boiled, the rice has finished cooking, and the chicken has become a side dish for curry. This tells us that the cooking activities have finished in the *Begawai* dance. The above shows the original cultural practices because in the activity after cooking, the dish is served as chicken curry, rice, and drinking water.

c. *Makan Beradat*

Makan Beradat is a series of customs carried out during the *Gawai* ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe's wedding, which coincides with the procession of drinking water of love. This activity is carried out at night after carrying out a series of customs in the morning until the afternoon. The phenomenon of *Makan Beradat*, as shown in Figure 5, is represented by important figures, namely *Batin*, *Monti*, the male heir, and other figures, eating together at the male hall served on a tree. Apart from that, there is also a women's hall where women can eat together. It is a traditional meal because traditional figures gather together in the same tree.



Figure 5. Traditional Figures of *Makan Beradat* (Customary Eating) During the Procession of Drinking Compassionate Water.
[Source: Rian Photo Collection, 2024]



Figure 6. Dancers Sitting Facing Each Other Depicting the Atmosphere of *Makan Beradat*
[Source: Documentation of *Begawai* Dance when Performing at *Gelar Budaya Etnis Selendang Sutra* 2021]

In the *Begawai* dance, the traditional eating part represents face-to-face eating together. The representation shows the dancers spreading a cloth as a mat to sit on and preparing dance props which are neatly arranged, plus there is dialogue the dancers say “*bang yoklah makan lagi*” “*haaa iyee*”, It is felt to indicate that eating together can begin. So, the object is concluded as a preparation for a traditional meal, and it is concluded that the interpretant of the scene is a form of transformation of the part of preparing and serving food. The representant of the property is arranged as an object of a place to eat and a pandan mat so that the interpretant of the form of the property is like a *poho* or tray as a place for food to be served and a pandan mat as a place for people to sit facing each other. In practice, it supports the original activity because the observation results show that preparations such as spreading mats and arranging food occur.

Then, the next representation is the visual form of the dancer sitting on a cloth mat and arranging the properties in a row right in front of the dancer while moving to clean and arrange the food on the *poho*. Then there are two camps, the first is in front and the second is behind. The dancers' movements are like telling each other stories, inviting and joining together, and there are movements like eating with their hands, taking food from the tree and then feeding it to their mouths. So, the object concluded in this dance scene is eating together. So, it is concluded that the scene is an interpretant of the transformation form of a traditional eating event. However, this dance scene does not fully resemble a traditional meal because, in general, the dominant group is a group of men. However, the dance cannot present its original cultural practices because all the dancers are women. The formation of two camps, as in Figure 6, also supports the separation between men and women in traditional eating. However, the *Begawai* dance can also not convey its cultural practices because the position in front of the traditional meal becomes the gathering point for the leader and traditional figures played by female dancers in their performances. So, it is felt that in changing the form of eating traditional food into a dance performance, the original identity is lost. Because the dancers are all women, the delivery of cultural practices in eating traditional food is too forced. However, it can be understood that this scene is delivered without eliminating the meaning of the activities in the traditional eating ceremony.

After the three parts found were explained, namely cockfighting, cooking, and traditional eating, it was concluded that there was a new form of change in the original phenomenon into a dance performance in the *Begawai* dance. This is also based on the documentation data obtained, which states that the *Begawai* dance is a form of transformation of the cooking phenomenon of the *Gawai* wedding ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe. Departing from the results of observations and documentation data, it is similar to the process of change or transformation process, as stated by [31] that the result of the process of change from one form to another that undergoes changes that occur produces new forms. In addition, the existence of transformation that occurs changes in form and meaning, and the message contained in the new form will remain the same [33]. In line with the observation results found in the *Begawai* dance, the dance presents movements that have a new visual form, such as a cockfighting arena with two dancers in the middle as if there were cocks fighting, a pile of firewood and above it, there is a cauldron with dancers moving while stirring the food. There is the shape of a roof and a losing cock in front of it, the movement of peeling and cutting the ingredients to be cooked. The movements presented in the *Begawai* dance have meaning and remain the same as the original phenomenon.

3.3 Creativity in *Begawai* Dance

In this *Begawai* dance, it is concluded that the choreographer carries out a creative process. According to Hendiyana, the choreographer's creative process as a dance creation carried out periodically with the discovery is closely related to the creative imagination process,

aesthetic experience, and the choreographer's social empirical experience in solving problems [38]. The realm of imagination enables a person to interpret experiences during his life by appreciating nature and the social environment so that in imagining beauty, there is a high level of imagination in the mind and the Penta's dreams [39]. Imagination in the choreography process plays a role in encouraging creative thinking towards realizing, developing and discovering the choreographer's inner thoughts, which are adapted to the choreographer's ideas so that the resulting movements are new and appropriate movement creations [15]. The results of observations from the documentation of the *Begawai* dance work prove this. The creative process and imagination of the arranger can be seen from the emergence of movements that show how the dancers' movements are like fighting as if they were fighting chickens, stirring the food, and the movement of feeding food, as well as visual forms that depict cultural practices during the *Gawai* wedding ceremony, such as a fighting arena, a cooking place with piles of wood on top of a cauldron, a chicken losing a fight, properties resembling a *poho*, and a *Makan Beradat* atmosphere with cloth as a seat mat as if sitting on a mat and tree properties as food containers surrounded by the dancers.

Then, related to semiotics, it is interpreted as things in life that are used as tools to find the way with signs. Likewise, the same applies to movements that indicate something, such as traffic lights, flags, and so on [24]. Sign language is classified as a communication process that conveys a message. This communication process is called nonverbal communication, which conveys a message without using words but using body language, facial expressions, sign language, eye contact, and other objects such as clothing and everyday tools. Body language will be studied in the *Begawai* dance to find the message conveyed. Based on the observation results, in the *Begawai* dance, it is concluded that gestures or language originate from the body and are appropriate to the phenomenon of the *Gawai* ceremony and when the *Amai-Amai* are cooking. These movements are found in dancers moving to dance, resembling stirring movements, cutting spices, putting in ingredients, taking ingredients, and movements that resemble cooking scenes. Similar to what was conveyed by the choreographer, who said that the movements made resemble the activities that the *Amai-Amai* do when they are behind the yard, such as *Amai-Amai* also preparing other ingredients such as peeling the skin of spices, cutting pepper and onions, taking water, and while cleaning. In addition, movements were also found to prepare the cooking place for the *Amai-Amai* by collecting wood as a source of fire later, stirring it up, and blowing or fanning it so the fire stays alive. It was concluded again that the movements present in the *Begawai* dance are a creative form of choreography in creating dance movements inspired by the activities carried out by the *Amai-Amai* cooking during the *Gawai* wedding ceremony.

The new movements present in the *Begawai* dance using elements of beauty are part of the expression of the arranger in presenting the phenomenon that exists during the *Gawai* wedding ceremony into a dance performance. The process does not eliminate or maintain the same meaning and value in the phenomenon because this *Begawai* dance is inseparable from the customs of the Talang Mamak Tribe by always involving chickens in all traditional activities.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, the conclusions in this study are as follows: first, the wedding ceremony in the Talang Mamak tribe, the community calls *Gawai*. This term is interpreted as a party by its relationship to the wedding ceremony. In this *Gawai* wedding ceremony, there are a series of customs carried out by the community, including: *Melekat Janji*, *Petang Mendaun*, *Menggantung Pauh-Pauh*, *Bunga Adat*/ Dowry, *Upacara Nikah*/Wedding Ceremony, *Makan Beradat*, *Tiang Gelanggang*, *Mengadu Ayam*, *Acara Menyembang*, and *Ditegur Diajar*.

Second, the *Begawai* Dance is a creative dance work that transforms the cooking phenomenon that occurs at the *Gawai* wedding ceremony of the Talang Mamak tribe, danced by seven female dancers. The change in form from the original activity to a dance performance consisted of 3 parts: *Sabung Ayam*, cooking activities, and *Makan Beradat*. These changes in several scenes eliminate their cultural identity, so the process of changing into an artistic performance does not fully show its original form. However, the meaning of the delivery in each activity scene still shows the events in the *Gawai* ceremony. Studied using Pierce's semiotic model theory (representamen, object, and interpretant) in the *Begawai* dance work, the researcher, as an interpreter, conveys the meaning that is interpreted subjectively to the three parts of the transformation found. The series of analyses concluded that the author's interpretations included: 1) *Sabung Ayam*: cockfighting arena with five dancers forming a box, *Sabung Ayam* with two dancers with fighting movements, and lyrics in the music "*Ayam kau berape? Seratos?*" "*haa dueatos berani ni?*" "*Berani!*" shows the occurrence of betting. 2) cooking: the arrangement of properties with cloth underneath like a pile of wood on top of a cauldron, cloth properties like the roof of a house show the cooking position is at the back, the cock loses the fight on the low-level dancer in front of the visual of the roof of the house, the movement of two dancers stirring the food in the cauldron shows the occurrence of cooperation, and the lyrics or dialogue in the music "*ha ayam lah ade apelagi tak dimasak?*", "*haa comlah kite masak*" shows the cooking incident in this scene. 3) *Makan Beradat*: props resembling *poho* are used as containers for eating, which are arranged in rows, and cloth is stretched as a mat, and the traditional dining atmosphere shows dancers sitting face to face with movements as if they were eating.

Third, from the transformation process of the three phenomena of cultural practices in the *Gawai* ceremony into the *Begawai* dance, it is concluded that there is a change in the ego and mind of the artist in carrying out cultural diplomacy at the cultural event. In transferring its form, the researcher found a creative process, such as a dance creation, carried out by the choreographer. The creative process found from the resulting movements is a form of creative imagination in accordance with the cultural practices carried out by the Talang Mamak tribe, namely the movement of fighting chickens, cooking movements (peeling, cutting, cleaning, ladling, and stirring food), and the movement of feeding food, as well as visual cultural practices such as *Sabung Ayam* arenas, piles of wood on top of cauldrons, roofs of houses in the front, traditional eating atmosphere.

Based on the three points above, conveying cultural practices into artistic performances creates an empirical gap in understanding the identity of the phenomena of *Sabung Ayam*, cooking activity, and *Makan Beradat*. This is because the change process involves the artist's thinking to encourage individuals to realize the creator's feelings according to their ideas so that they are realized and make their cultural identity disappear.

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