

## Indigenous Tourism: Ngarot Tradition in Indramayu, West Java, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** This study describes about Ngarot tradition, a tradition in the Lelea village, Indramayu, West Java Indonesia. As a thanksgiving to the coming planting season. Ngarot tradition intends to bring young people together who will be entrusted with the task of farming. This tradition must be followed by the village youth who is a virgin. In the implementation of Ngarot tradition, there are various art performances such as mask dance and the tap dancers, Reog, festivals and Rice Lengko, typical food of Indramayu. The research method is the form of qualitative research, observation and interviews with people who do Ngarot traditional in Indramayu. Local wisdom in the Lelea village, Indramayu Indonesia can be used as an indigenous tourism. But it is unfortunate the promotion of tourism in this area is very less. the prerequisites for sustainable indigenous tourism include: "land ownership, community control of tourism, government support for tourism development, restricted access to indigenous homelands and reclaiming natural or cultural resources utilized for tourism.

**Key words:** Ngarot traditions, indigenous tourism, village, people, area

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### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia consists of 17,504 islands, 1.340 tribes and 546 languages with a number of customs, local knowledge and culture are very diverse. Culture is very important role in tourism. One of the things that cause people to want to travel is their desire to see the way of life and culture of other people elsewhere in the world and a desire to learn the culture of other people. The tourism industry recognizes the role of culture as a pull factor by promoting the cultural characteristics of destinations. In the tourism industry type of tourism that use cultural resources as major capital in the tourist attraction known as cultural tourism (Pitana and Diarta, 2003). One type of cultural tourism is Indigenous tourism, type of cultural tourist: indigenous cultural tourist activities of interest with visits to cultural centers, art and crafts, cultural performances and festivals (Smith, 2003).

Local wisdom that is discussed in this study is about the tradition of Ngarot in Indramayu, Indonesia and can be used as indigeneous tourism.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

In an effort to collected field data, the writer conducted data in October 2015-January 2016. Writer applied the methods and techniques of qualitative, participant observation and in-depth interviews. In this context, the writer did interview to informants Indramayu, West Java Indonesia people running tradition of "ngarot". The writer studied the characteristics in determination of

informants in the qualitative (Johnson, 2002). The informant is not based on the principle of sampling. Informants were individuals who understood the particular culture in its society without consideration of sampling at all. Snowballing technique is not appropriate used because the informant did not necessarily come from the same domain which can be connected in a network as required in this rolling snowball technique. So with a good report, through careful and profound observation, the writer chooses the informants who knowingly about something. Three key informants were chosen because they qualify as an informant.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews and observations in Indramayu community described as follows:

**History tradition ngarot:** Tradition Ngarot arise because of the idea of ancestral communities Lelela, Ki Buyut Kapol (Rahyono, 2009). Ki Buyut Kapol is a very influential people in the village Lelea, he is a rich man and very loyal to the village, it is not uncommon people from the younger generation to the older generation used to gather at his residence. Given this, he had the idea to unite the youth. The idea is realized by providing an area of 26.100 m<sup>2</sup> that he had, the goal is to build a life pattern of mutual cooperation among the youth in the village Lelea. The idea was well received by the youth and the entire community.

By greeting the parents because Ki Kapol not have any children and proof of his love for children (youth village), then he give away plot of land to be seized by the youth. Rather than do that is not true then he proposed to raise the children in her home for a bite to eat and later given the order to work on the fields of the his give away". When the planting season arrives, the hero of the youth gathering at his residence and have a party drinking and eating. After processing paddy season arrived the youths worked together to cultivate the paddy fields. This activity is carried out continuously every year. The party activity was then known as Ngarot tradition and became the origin of the tradition Ngarot.

**What is Ngarot tradition?:** Ngarot tradition is one of the traditional ceremony in the Lelea village, Indramayu, West Java, Indonesia. Ngarot tradition intends together the young people who will be given a job on development programs in agriculture. In addition, the tradition also aims to foster healthy relationships among youth quartermaster (teens) so that the young people can get to know each other, mutual adjust the attitude, will and behavior in accordance with the noble values of ancestral culture. It has a lot of value and meaning to the lives of people, especially the youth generation. Ngarot tradition is also an effort to develop and preserve the cultural heritage of our ancestors.

**Who participated in this tradition?:** Participants are young men and young women who wear distinctive clothing. Uniquely the traditional Ngarot ceremony is only for young women who are still virgins. They must wear traditional dress of kebaya and selendang or blouse and scarf equipped with accessories such as necklaces, bracelets, rings, brooches, hair ornaments and a gold pin. They wear flowers such as ylang, frangipani, bougainvillea and jasmine in their hair. While young men are wearing black baggy pants called komboran and equipped with a headband and bahar tree roots bracelets.

All the accessories are symbols and have certain messages. Beautiful and attractive, for example, a message that contains in ylang flower for the girls is they should guard their virginity, jasmine has a message for young women to maintain personal hygiene and purity, paper flowers containing a message that young women should keep beauty, as village flowers, bracelets, necklaces, rings, pins, brooches means that farmers have to work hard and diligently in order to get abundant rice harvest. While the bahar roots bracelet worn by the young men are meant that a man should protect and nurturing his family and the community.

Kebaya and komboran are typical attire for Ngarot ceremony in Lelea which have a special meaning so that people would keep and preserve the indigenous peasant clothing. Scarves symbolize the notion that young women should maintain the physical appearance to look.

**Where the tradition is implemented?:** Lelea village district. Lelea, Indramayu, West Java province of Indonesia. At this place has a tradition with exciting cultural and adolescent only genuine descendants of this village is still a virgin to follow that tradition.

**When did the tradition is implemented?:** This tradition carried out when farmers want to start stocking paddy (rice seeds sowing or irrigate the fields). The timing of Ngarot tradition that is between the last quarter of every year around October, November and December for the month the month, the farmers began to work their fields because it has entered the rainy season. For the date and month of implementation, Ngarot tradition is not specified but regarding the implementation, Ngarot tradition is usually held on Wednesday.

Before determining the implementation of this tradition, there are at least two times the village held a conference led by the village chief, to preparing the implementation of the traditional ceremony. The first village consultation, bringing together the village officials, village leaders, community leaders, youth leaders. This is done to determine the day, date, month and implementation of Ngarot tradition. Once a decision is made, then the village chief announced the implementation of this tradition. The announcement coincides with the earth charity event. The second village consultation is to gather the youth candidate, to set the style and color of used the clothes and other provisions.

**Why Ngarot tradition should be held?:** Ngarot implemented as a proof of gratitude for the coming of planting season, because the communities in society of Lelea village are farmers with their shape giving their gratitude to the arrival of the growing season they believe that the harvest will be have a good result. Besides this tradition also serves in various fields such as economy, culture and social. In the economic sphere, this tradition can improve agriculture and food security because basically this tradition is preparing young people for working the fields that have been provided by an ancestor.

In the field of culture, Ngarot tradition can be a means of entertainment and preservation of traditional culture of local communities such as mask dance and the dancers of tap.

**How Ngarot tradition implemented?:** The implementation of the tradition Ngarot is when the young people gathered at the residence of the chief, it is done to create a harmonious relationship between young men and women in the village because one of the functions of the tradition is Ngarot foster socially healthy among the young-Quartermaster (teenagers) so that the young people can get to know each other, mutual adjust the attitude, will and behavior in accordance with the noble values of ancestral culture. They were escorted through the village.

The implementation of this tradition starts at 09.00 am and when the participants have been gathered in the home village chief (Kuwu). Once assembled, the participants and Officials preparing to start a parade around the village. Finished held a parade for an hour, the participants then gather at the Village Hall, where it has provided traditional entertainment such as Mask dance by men to entertain the girls and Ronggeng Ketuk dance for the youth. The girls do sawer (Indonesian traditional activity, when someone perform their dances so the audience will give them amount of money) to Mask dancer, while the youth dancing Ketuk Tilu, after the village chief distributing food typical of Indramayu, nasi Lengko, a rice sprinkled with sprouts braised hot water, slices of tempeh and tofu, sliced cucumber, celery soy sauce, crackers, fried onions and peanut sauce. Sometimes there is also that in sprinkle with sliced omelet. They were a short break at 14:00 p.m. Then Ngarot ceremony was resumed at 16.00 p.m. till night. The composition of the implementation of the marchers are as follows:

- In the front row are Mrs. Kuwu (village chief's wife) and was followed by Officials (Staff village)
- The next row is the woman, who has been decorated with flowers on her head
- The third row is a local musical art that is Reog
- The fourth row is Kuwu (Village Head) flanked by a Lebe (religious figures who exist in every village) and a village elder (Kaur government) and accompanied by an officer carrying an umbrella
- The fifth row is the participants of Ngarot (youths)
- The last row is local music, tambourines to accompany the youth

Along the parade route, people and domestic travelers and international travelers filled the street to watch and escorted the participants of Ngarot. After the parade reached the goal of the village hall, the welcome gamelan accompanying participants with songs Jipang Keraton and a sprinkling of yellow rice as a tribute to the

king and his wife's village, Kuwu. Once participants Ngarot located at the Village Hall, the top event of Ngarot starts. Beginning with the committee report on the implementation of Ngarot tradition, then followed by a speech of Kuwu as well Kuwu and Officials symbolically handed over a set of agricultural tools to the representatives of the village youths Lelea. The composition of the handover event as follows:

- Kuwu (Village Head) handed over to the youth representatives of improved seed means the seed to be planted and distributed
- Mother of kuwu (Wife village chief) handed pitcher of water, the intention is to treat the rice crop has been planted as a symbol of irrigation
- The village elders handed fertilizer, the intention is that the plant remain fertile
- The mercury handing earth farm tools, the intention is to cultivate farmland well
- Lebe (religious figures who exist in every village) handed over a piece of yellow bamboo segment androngs leaves and banana leaves which will plug in the rice fields, the intention is to avoid that the rice plant from pests

After the core event is completed, the symbolic head of the village struck the gong as evidence that Ngarot events have been unveiled. After the event continued with dance entertainment, Ronggeng Ketuk and Tanjidor. All participants are welcome to get together to dance until 19:30 p.m., the night. The participants gather in the village to carry out the closing accompanied by gamelan Jipang and other attractions. In addition, the implementation of a myth in the parade or procession that is trusted by the people who say "if there are participants who are not holy (virgin) followed this tradition, the flowers are on his head wither". Although, the myth is not supported by the evidence critically but the myths wanted to give moral education of young couple behave in relationships.

Local knowledge is a way of life and science as well as various life strategies that intangible activities undertaken by local communities in addressing the various problems in the fulfillment of their needs. In a foreign language is often conceived as a local policy of "local wisdom" or "local knowledge" or local intelligence "local genius". Local knowledge is human intelligence that is owned by a particular ethnic group gained through experience of community. This means that local knowledge is the result of a particular society through their experience and not necessarily experienced by other communities. These values will be attached very strongly

in certain societies and the value it has been through a long passage of time, throughout the existence of the community (Koentjaraningrat, 2009).

Scientists anthropology as Koentjaraningrat (Melanie, 2003), Spradley, Taylor, Suparlan categorizing human culture into the container to the idea that local wisdom social activities, artifacts. Culture is an overall knowledge owned by a group of human life and to serve as guidelines for interpreting the environment in the form of actions every day. Ngarot tradition is one of the local knowledge possessed by the people of Indramayu, Indonesia. This tradition can serve as cultural tourism. More specifically, indigenous tourism. Those tourists who venture in search of traditional and ethnic cultures in remote locations are often motivated partly by an Anthropological desire to learn more about communities under threat from global forces but also to satisfy to reviews their need for cultural experiences of a diverse nature. The impacts of this increasingly widespread from of cultural tourism are significant, both for the communities who are the object of the tourist gaze and for the local and national economies that stand to benefit from tourism development.

Tourism and cultural events such as Ngarot tradition can be seen as an opportunity for tourists to experience, understand and appreciate the character of the destination, the richness and diversity of cultures. The tradition of cultural tourism provides an opportunity having personal contact directly with the local community and to the individuals who have specialized knowledge of a cultural object and in this case is Ngarot tradition. Indigenous Tourism, Ngarot Tradition in Indramayu, West Java, Indonesia there is a lack of promotion and lesser known. There are numerous examples of indigenous images being used to promote destinations including: Maori images in New Zealand (Ryan, 1997), Sami Images in Norway, Sweden and Finland (Muller and Pettersson, 2001), Aboriginal images in Australia (Zeppel, 1998) and Inuit and Dene images in northern Canada (Notzke, 1999).

Indigenous tourism is one of the fastest growing sections of the tourism industry and indigenous tourism can, if done well, provide opportunities to promote greater culture understanding while increasing indigenous peoples capacity and economy. For example within British Columbia, Canada the indigenous (commonly referred to as Aboriginal in Canada) tourism industry is expected to contribute over \$50 million to BC's economy by 2012 up from the approximately \$35 million in 2005. Self determination appears to be the key for sustainable indigenous tourism (Zeppel, 1998). This means that indigenous peoples should (Johnston, 2000). "Set the terms for visitations to their traditional territories as well as other third party uses of their collective cultural property". Support for this principle is inherent within the

concept of community-based tourism. Zeppel (1998) arrived at a similar conclusion, as reflected in her view that the prerequisites for sustainable indigenous tourism include: "land ownership, community control of tourism, government support for tourism development, restricted access to indigenous homelands and reclaiming natural or cultural resources utilized for tourism.

## CONCLUSION

The important role festivals and special events "ngarot tradition" play in the development of cultural tourism. Often festivals and events are more accessible to the masses than other art forms, as they provide an open forum for the celebration of life and the continuity of living. This tradition can be seen as an expression of local community culture, traditions and identity. Local wisdom in the village of Lelea, Indramayu, Indonesia role in shaping the character education for youth in accordance with the customs of people of Indramayu and can be used as an indigenous tourism. For the people of Indramayu, indigenous tourism activity will increase welfare.

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