

## ONDEL-ONDEL SHOW: BETWEEN LOCAL WISDOM PRESERVATION AND DAMAGE TO BETAWI CULTURE

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### Abstract

This research aims to reveal two sides of the iconic ondel-ondel: a valuable cultural heritage and the ondel-ondel show that is currently using as an economic benefit of just a symbolic one or even asking donation. The main question is does this ondel-ondel show become preservers of Betawi culture or destroy Betawi culture values? The study is conducted using descriptive qualitative methods by studying various literatures related to ondel-ondel and conducting interviews with some ondel-ondel musicians and Betawi cultural artists. From this research, it is known that ondel-ondel is a form of culture which is a condition with philosophical meaning and symbol. It is hoped that by giving an ondel-ondel philosophical understanding as a local wisdom, the Betawi culture of ondel-ondel will not be extinct and can be inherited as a cultural icon for future generations.

**Keywords:** Cultural show, Ondel-ondel, Local wisdom, Betawi culture

### INTRODUCTION

Art is the result of human culture that can be documented or preserved, published, and developed as an effort towards the advancement of civilization and enhance the degree of humanity of the nation by elevating regional culture. Basically, the current development of art, often referred to as contemporary art development, has been said to be inseparable from the social, economic and cultural system of a society; but also typically able to show aesthetic manifestations and

value reflections that are critical to the socio-cultural-economic system that lives it (Nugroho & Himawan 2014: 100).

Each cultural group has a diversity of arts which will make a culture have characteristics and characteristics that distinguish them from other cultures. These differences will enrich a culture so that the culture has a different color and style in society. As a great nation we are rich in colors and cultural patterns because this nation has hundreds of ethnic groups and hundreds of colors that decorate the cultural patterns.

Hofstede in Lewis (2004: 21) in his book entitled Cross-Cultural Business Communication, defines culture as a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one category of people from other categories. Indonesia is a country that has a variety of tribes and cultures. And national culture is a collection of regional cultures that have a variety of colors and patterns. All cultures have their strengths. There is also a culture which is a fusion of the process of acculturation of people which merges to create a beautiful and colorful local culture.

Jakarta as the capital city of the country, the metropolitan city is also rich in culture, the Betawi tribe as the original inhabitants of Jakarta are considered to have lost color because of the urbanization process that occurs so that it is inferior to the colors and cultural patterns of other tribes who participated in coloring it. Indeed, the color and peculiarity of the Betawi tribe are very beautiful to be seen and enjoyed, but because the original residents were displaced by the development it is very difficult at this time to find authentic and unique Betawi culture to decorate the colors of national culture.

The Betawi people are also a term for the native Jakartans who inhabited the Capital Territory of the Republic of Indonesia from the beginning known as open-minded communities. Basically, because the city of Jakarta is a port city and a business center which later became the Capital of Indonesia forcing its citizens to be able to deal with foreigners who entered the Jakarta area or known as migrants, because of this open nature, some Betawi people intermarried with migrants with diverse tribes. The tribes or groups that once lived in the Betawi region consisted of Malays, Arabs, Sundanese, Javanese, Bugis, Balinese, and others. So from cross-marriages, we get some new cultures that take the style of the tribes and groups.

Because of the many cultural influences that become colors in Betawi culture, making Betawi culture so rich and varied. The various types of Betawi Buadaya that still exist, among others, are illustrated in marriage ceremonies, circumcision, prophet's birthday and other ways of living Betawi culture. Also, Betawi cultural diversity is still visible in the Betawi tribal houses, Betawi special foods and which are manifested in Betawi art. Popular Betawi arts are Tanjidor music, gambang kromong, cokek, samrah and so on. Besides, Betawi also has a unique traditional art that is usually combined with music, namely ondel-ondel art.

Ondel-ondel is one of the typical Betawi arts. Ondel-ondel is a giant puppet that is interpreted by the Betawi people as a sacred culture and is used for ritual offerings to ancestral spirits. ondel-ondel or also known as barongan or barungan, is very attached to the Betawi culture. It is even listed as one of eight Betawi cultural icons that are regulated in Governor Regulation No. 11 of 2017 concerning Betawi Culture icons. Based on the regulation, it is stated that philosophically ondel-ondel means as a symbol of strength that can maintain security and order, being strong, brave, resolute, honest and anti-manipulation.

Unfortunately, the noble art that is considered sacred by the Betawi tribe has experienced a shift in meaning. Nowadays, ondel-ondel art has been used as an economic commodity tool that is used to make money for teenagers by "show" from one place to another. This activity is considered to nourish and disturb some of the community members because ondel-ondel is taken to travel around the streets of the village or the highway accompanied by the sound of music that is deafening. Even the music that is playing is also not music that should be a companion to ondel- ondel music such as the xylophone music. Songs that are played arbitrarily following the trends and tastes of the buskers ondel-ondel. Ranging from dangdut songs, India and even Korean songs.

The ondel-ondel are also decorated with the slightest interest in contemporary colors and designs that can make anyone who sees turn their attention to these ondel-ondel buskers. unfortunately, this show activity is carried out anytime and anywhere in the city of Jakarta, especially on the streets. Show is done on this road to interfere with other road users to slow down the speed of their vehicles so that the ondel ondel who is dancing and spinning on the road is not hit by a

vehicle. The ondel-ondel used for show is also a bit annoying and unsettling for children because they are impressed when show scares and even chases children to tears.

Not all ondel-ondel show alongside bad roads are also ondel ondel that are decorated in such a way accompanied by mini kromong xylophone music which when watched is very entertaining. In addition to singing ondel-ondel, the personnel also use Betawi special clothes that are interesting to be seen and become entertainment for the community. Ondel-ondel that is displayed with attractive appearance, color and packaging makes this art awaited by the public.

Departing from this, I am interested in researching the ondel-ondel art used for show whether this is a cultural preserver or considered a cultural destroyer. It is hoped that my study can be used as a material for ethnographic and phenomenological research to obtain a recommendation that is used by policy makers to preserve the culture of the noble betawi people. It is hoped that after this rich culture will not become extinct, it will continue to the extent of our children and grandchildren.

Betawi Theater is a performance that carries stories or stories and is divided into four types; speech theater, speechless theater, puppets and role theater. Theater without speech is a type of theater that is played without speaking, so it is only limited to demonstrating gestures accompanied by music and songs. In Betawi theater without speech, there are two, namely Ondel-ondel and gemblok. Ondel-ondel, is a container that is used as a personification of ancestors. Thus it can be regarded as a carrier or story, although only as a teaching aid that does not speak or speak (Sumardjo, 1992: 76). a village and ancestral personification as protectors. The mindset of the people who still believed in mystical things made Ondel-ondel dolls used as an intermediary media for ancestral spirits (Warisan Budaya, 2019).

Ondel-ondel was formerly named Barongan. The word Barongan means a group, it is meant that Ondel-ondel art always appears hand in hand or groups. Ondel-ondel is one of the Betawi arts that is classified as a theater without speech. Aside from initially playing the personification of ancestors, in his performance there were only dance movements and no dialogue. Historically, the existence of ondel-ondel has been shown to the Betawi people in the periphery as a reinforcement of the city and the city people enjoy ondel-ondel as

entertainment. Ondel-ondel is no longer the property of the Betawi Pinggir community, but belongs to the Betawi as a whole community.

Ondel-ondel, is a container that is used as a personification of ancestors. Thus it can be considered as a carrier of a story or story, although only as a teaching aid that does not speak or speak (Sumardjo, 1992: 76). Betawi Ondel-ondel Dolls consist of 2 parts, namely the head and body parts. On the head there is a crown adorned with flora and fauna paintings such as peacock/ hong, dragon, lotus flower, pomegranate flower, and clover. There is also a coconut flower on the head of the Ondel-ondel doll. Coconut flower shaped like a collection of coconut leaves is compared to the city of Jakarta which in the 15th century was called Sunda Kelapa because part of the Sunda Kelapa region was a coconut plantation. Ondel-ondel doll faces are on average red on male and white Ondel-ondel dolls on female Ondel-ondel dolls. The red color on the male Ondel-ondel symbolizes strength, power, courage, and a strong ego while the white ondel-ondel symbolizes purity, tenderness, friendliness and disturbance.

At the beginning of the existence of Ondel-ondel, there is no definitive year number yet. Experts estimate that Ondel-ondel already existed in Jakarta centuries ago. The British merchant, W. Scot, noted in his book that types of dolls such as Ondel-ondel already existed in 1605. E.R. Scidmore, an American foreign tourist who came to Java and stayed long enough in Batavia, at the end of the 19th century, reported, in Java, The Garden of the East, a street art performance in Betawi in the form of dance. Schidmore did not specify what type of dance was playing on the street. But, it can be guessed that the art is Ondel-ondel, considering that the dance plays on the streets (Warisan Budaya, 2019).

In his book entitled *Geschiedenis Van Java*, volume II, W. Fruin Mees stated that in the 17th century there was a procession by displaying large puppets that were moved by humans (*Pos Kota*, June 29, 2001). J. J Rizal writes that Anthropological data found that ondel-ondel grew from Betawi agrarian culture which were still traced in village cleansing ceremonies in several suburbs of Jakarta, especially in Cireundeu and Ciputat. Besides Th. Piageud in *Javaanse Volkvertoningen* (1934) mentions a giant puppet called *Scott een reuse en een monster* that appeared at Prince Abdul Mufakhir's circumcision party commonly found in agrarian culture areas as a manifestation of the village's protective force, the disasters (Tempo, June 26, 2011).

Ondel-ondel is a giant doll. It is 2.5 meters high. The body frame is made of bamboo. Body diameter 80 cm. His face is made of wood. Big eyes bulging. Her hair is made from black fibers. To be more attractive in her hair, she was given a decoration of the sunflower. It was moved by someone inside the doll. Ondel-ondel is made as a pair, male and female. Similar to husband and wife. At present some make small Ondel-ondel and then some call it the Ondel-ondel child. The male Ondel-ondel's face was painted red. Color that is considered or believed to have the strength or courage in the face of evil forces from the outside. Given a crosswise mustache, beard, thick eyebrows, sideburns, and galing, fangs. Women's ondel-ondel faces are painted white or yellow. This color is considered to have subtlety and sincerity in its service to the environment. Given makeup lipstick, curling eyelashes, and sharp eyebrows. Sometimes a fly is made. Ondel-ondel clothing materials are 10 meters each. Ondel-ondel men's clothing is usually a dark color. The type of clothes clothing. For women chosen bright colors plain motifs or flowers. The type of clothes brackets. Both of them are wearing scarves. Material for making bamboo ropes, concrete nails and wire, ropes, dried banana leaves (palm leaves), palm fiber, coconut flower and colored paper or greaseproof paper, plastic ball, fiber, zinc, wool yarn, paint, fabric, wire and shirt buttons, gloves, gloves, and hoses. Ondel-ondel Making Equipment Saws, machetes, hammers, pliers Ondel-ondel Making Technique Broadly speaking, Ondel-ondel dolls are made through the following stages: making the lower and upper circumference, making the fingers, making the shoulders, making the waist, making the waist, make the shoulder, make the head, make the hair, make a shoulder, make the hand, try ondel-ondel, put on a mask, make breasts for female ondel-ondel, put ondel-ondel clothes, put coconut flowers.

On the body part, the female Ondel-ondel doll uses clothes called kebaya encim, while for men, the clothes used are sadaria or the tip of the oblique. On the lower body, the doll wears a glove called a jamblang glove. On official occasions, usually for male Ondel-ondel dolls on the shoulders are slung in a glove with a checkered pattern, whereas on Ondel-ondel women use a scarf patterned with flora or fauna.

Time and Place of the Performance Previously, the Ondel-ondel performance was used as a repellent and afterwards was used occasionally to enliven the circumcision and celebration of August



17th. When Ali Sadikin was the Governor of DKI Jakarta (1966-1977), Betawi art was promoted, aside from an effort to raise the image of the Betawi community as a local Jakarta community that had its characteristics, also in the context of establishing Jakarta as a tourist destination city. Since then, Ondel-ondel has functioned as an entertaining performance art. At present, Ondel-ondel complements events related to life cycle ceremonies (circumcision and marriage), holiday celebrations, Jakarta birthdays, guest welcoming, show around the village, 17 August, inauguration of office or building, and other activities. Its existence can be in the form of pageantry, tandak (dancing), or as a display.

The number of Ondel-ondel players is 2 people. However, in every performance a minimum reserve of 2 people is needed as well. This reserve is needed because on average it is only able to carry the 20-25 kg of Ondel-ondel, around 15 and a maximum of 30 minutes. because of the weight and because of the hot air inside. Ondel-ondel accompaniment Ondel-ondel accompanied by distinctive music. The music player consists of seven people, each carrying a tool in the form of a 2-piece drum namely a male drum and a female drum, kempul, gong, kenong, kecrek, and trumpet which are now commonly replaced by tehyan. In the beginning, Ondel-ondel's main song which was often played to accompany Ondel-ondel's sign (dance) and pencak silat attractions (if any) were leles and mangele songs. Over time, also played public songs such as Jali-jali, Sirih Kuning, Ondel-ondel, Keroncong Kemayoran, and so forth. Although Ondel-ondel has its accompaniment music, it can also be accompanied by Gambang Kromong or Tanjidor. Ondel-ondel Show During the procession, the sequence is Ondel-ondel in the front row, then followed by music players. The procession consisted of: a pair of Ondel-ondel, a 1-person Betawi house booster, 7-person music players, 2-4-person Ondel-ondel reserves, and 1 group leader.

During the procession, Ondel-ondel occasionally danced round and round. As for Ondel-ondel as a display, put it on the left and right of the entrance. The symbolic meaning of Ondel-ondel Ondel-ondel if examined in depth is not just a giant puppet, but has a symbolic meaning in it. The point is that Ondel-ondel art stores the wisdom to uphold a clean life from evil. Ondel-ondel reminded the importance of fighting the play that damages the order of human life.

In the DKI Jakarta Governor Regulation No.11 of 2017 Stipulates Ondel-ondel as one of the Betawi Cultural Icons. Determination of the Betawi Cultural Icons is intended as a preservation effort through an introduction that illustrates the characteristics of the Betawi people and the identity of DKI Jakarta Province as a tourist attraction. Determination of the Betawi Cultural Icons as intended aims to increase the sense of belonging and instill pride in the Betawi culture actively in the daily lives of the community, business people and government and as a means of promoting tourism and encouraging the development of a culture-based creative industry ([http: // jakarta-tourism.go.id/](http://jakarta-tourism.go.id/) accessed 15 October 2019).

Figure 1. Ondel-ondel as an Icon of Betawi Culture



(source: Pergub DKI No.11, 2017)

Based on the Governor Regulation, the form of Ondel-ondel Design is as follows: 1. Male face is red, thick black eyebrows, mustache and looks friendly. 2. The face of a white woman, glazed black-eyed, curved black eyebrows, curved eyelashes, red lips, ear studs or crowned earrings and crowned forehead. 3. Wearing dark ondel-ondel men with models of pangsi clothing, sling patterned cloth Betawi batik and using belts and subordinates of Betawi batik cloth. 4. Women's ondel-ondel clothes wear a long kebaya dress or a patterned flower brackets and a Betawi batik cloth with a shawl or sling attached to the



left shoulder towards the right waist and use a belt. Hair is made of black fibers.6. Headdress called coconut flower (manggar) with a total of 20 for women and 25 for men.

## **METHOD**

In this study Qualitative research methods are used. According to Rachmat Kriyantono (2009: 56) said qualitative research is research that does not use statistical procedures. Aiming to explain phenomena deeply. According to Creswell (2014: 135), case studies are qualitative approaches whose researchers explore real life, contemporary limited systems (cases) or various limited systems (various cases), through the collection of detailed and in-depth resources that involve diverse sources of multiple information (for example observations, interviews, audio-visual material, documents, and various reports, and report case descriptions and case themes).

The method used in this research is a case study, using a qualitative approach. With the object of research is ondel-ondel and the subject under study is the ondel-ondel buskers who are considered as destroyers of Betawi culture and some betawi culture experts. The study was conducted by observing and interviewing the object of research to obtain a clear picture of the problem. Researchers also examined some literature in the form of articles, bertia from newspapers and online portals.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The culture of each region usually implies or illustrates a meaning of an event that has occurred during the course of the formation of a work of art. As quoting a statement from Dharsono about culture which states that memahami to understand a culture is basically also to understand the meaning of a problem, a value and a certain symbol which is used as a reference by a certain group of people who support it (Dharsono, 2007: 126). Dharsono also stated that the notion of culture as a connotation of community expression would later be in the form of artifacts with all the philosophies and philosophies that lay behind them. Culture has 3 forms, among others: (1) cultural form as a complex of ideas, ideas, values, norms, rules, etc. (2) cultural form as a complex patterned behavior activity of humans in society. (3).

The form of culture as objects of human work (Koentjaraningrat, 2004: 10-11).

The Betawi tribe is a regional culture, influenced by other cultures. The forms of other cultures are still seen as elements of Betawi culture. Ondel-ondel as a form of Betawi culture in the form of human work which was originally made by the Betawi community has special elements such as shape, color, clothing and musical accompaniment, very thick with the influence of Malay culture, Bugis, Chinese and other cultures. In DKI Jakarta Governor Regulation No.11 Year 2017 ondel-ondel is a Betawi cultural icon which philosophically has meaning as a symbol of strength that can maintain security and order, be strong, brave, firm, honest, and anti-manipulation. From the philosophical reasons conveyed in the Governor's Regulation, it shows that Ondel-ondel is a symbol of strength where this symbol is interpreted as something that is considered to have the ability to maintain and maintain order, specifically order in the DKI Jakarta area as well as referring to a rigidity, courage, as a symbol of honesty and ondel-ondel is also interpreted as something that is anti-manipulation.

Function, Use and Placement of Ondel-Ondel namely as a complement to various traditional ceremonies of the Betawi community. As decoration at the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government's ceremonial events, festivals, performances of foreign artists, exhibitions, shopping centers, the Tourism Industry, public meetinghouses and public areas that allow for aesthetic and safety aspects Placement on the right and left side of the entrance, in the lobby as a complement to photos (photo wall), on a staging stage or in visual form on LED / Videotron, or elsewhere according to aesthetics.

Ondel-ondel as the Betawi Cultural Icon which became the cultural form of the Betawi Tribe in the process many events that accompanied it and then became what it is today. Like the decoration on the head of an ondel-ondel doll made from coconut flower-shaped ornaments. In this case the coconut flower symbolizes the trees on the coast of Sunda Kelapa. To package the history behind the coconut flower decoration placed as decoration on the ondel-ondel. The crown decoration worn on ondel-ondel dolls symbolically illustrates the existence of a kingdom in Jakarta at that time. The red and white face of the ondel-ondel doll also symbolically symbolizes that in human life there are always 2 traits (Good traits and one side have bad traits). The

clothes that complement the ondel-ondel doll also symbolically symbolize the existence of cultural influences from outside (China, India and Arabic), with the shape and pattern used on the cloth cover ondel-ondel dolls.

This is also embodied in the book Dharsono, that the results of culture as cultural expressions are represented as artifacts in the form of culture or strokes in the form of images, objects or paintings, such as on cloth (Dharsono, 2007: 114). Ondel-ondel is one of the works of art that is based on Betawi culture which incidentally is an urban society that is influenced by a condition of the Government internally at that time and influence from outside (external). Where is the location of the coastal city of Jakarta (formerly the port of Sunda Kelapa) which has trade relations with China, India and Arabia? Then everything related to art and culture will be reflected in the culture of the Betawi people for generations.

The iconic position of an area also does not escape the description of human life with its journey, but the track record is always followed by the development of the age where technology is always with it. As the current form of ondel-ondel, there is a possibility of the manifestation of the shape of a human object. Or it could also be as a medium or intermediary between ancestral spirits and human life now. As the opinion in the book Akhyar Yusuf Lubis which states that humans are considered the same as objects, realities that are reflected (through the mind) and as historical social beings (Lubis, 2014: 189). It can be meant that ondel-ondel is a reflection of the historical social life of the Betawi community which is reflected in the form of objects, namely ondel-ondel.

In reality today the iconic betawi culture icon is used by some young people to make money by "show" from one place to another. In one day, if we are at a certain point on the highway in Jakarta, there are dozens of ondel-ondel musicians who walk carrying ondel-ondel from one place to another, accompanied by very loud music using the songs of xylophone kromong, dangdut songs, india and even Korean songs that are currently popular. They toured from the morning until midnight.

Make some people, especially children, ondel-ondel where show becomes a fun spectacle and entertainment for them. But for the majority of Jakartans to feel sad why ondel-ondel which in its history is

a form of culture that is valuable for commercial purposes. The show ondel-ondel usually runs on highways where the road conditions are very crowded, this often causes congestion because road users must slow down to avoid contact with ondel-ondel.

Usually show ondel-ondel is a group of young people in their teens, although there is also an ondel-ondel group run by adults. The question is when the ondel-ondel are show and going around in school hours, are the teenagers who bring the ondel-ondel not going to school? Then there is a follow-up question whether they go to school because they have graduated from school and work ondel-ondel show or they should go to school but drop out of school. If the latter fact is true, the meaning of ondel-ondel traveling around today is a social problem because teenagers dropped out of school to make money by involving in ondel-ondel show.

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) believes that ondel-ondel should not be used for show. According to him, any way to beg in Jakarta is not justified (*Republika*, accessed 10 October 2019). From the opinion of the deputy governor of DKI Jakarta, it was assumed that ondel-ondel singing was included as a beggar activity. Where the main purpose of show is just to make money. And consequently this is a form of violation of the Law. Meanwhile, the prohibition of begging or vagrancy is also regulated in Article 504 and Article 505 of the Criminal Code (KUHP), Book 3 on Violation.

Omaswati, one of the Betawi cultural artists, has ever acted on ondel-ondel who are traveling around show. According to him, don't use ondel-ondel as my culture as a tool to make money. Those people should sing using their voices to sing or dance without using ondel-ondel as their guide to earn money. But if we look back at the history of ondel-ondel, ondel-ondel is not in terms of a transformation of an art form called Barongan, which is defined as a group. In the past, ondel-ondel was played in groups or groups from the outskirts of Jakarta to the downtown area. Is this not called show and whether ondel ondel at that time was used as an economic commodity tool as well.

Based on this, the need for cultural understanding, especially in the younger generation in learning activities, is that valuable cultural heritage, especially the cultural heritage of DKI Jakarta, is in the form of ondel-ondel. Ondel-ondel that is displayed should be ondel-ondel in accordance with good Betawi culture with deep philosophical meaning

and accompanied by traditional music art that can be packaged which may be packaged in a modern way, therapy is not accompanied by music music such as Korean dangdut and so on which is only used as a means of attracting attention to raise money.

In this case the local government especially the DKI Regional Government must also provide places in accordance with the Governor Regulation No.11 of 2007 that ondel-ondel can be displayed in hotels, tourist attractions and other cultural events, so that marwah ondel-ondel as a cultural icon Betawi is maintained and ondel-ondel can be preserved and bequeathed so that future generations can still see and enjoy the ondel-ondel art as a manifestation of the unique, interesting and entertaining culture of DKI Jakarta.

In addition to education on understanding cultural values and high philosophical meanings, it should also be conveyed to young geographers, especially ondel-ondel buskers so they know how deep the philosophical meaning of ondel-ondel is. So that when ondel-ondel is used as a tool for busking for they understand and know the meanings behind the ondel symbol. When they know and understand the meaning of ondel-ondel as part of the local wisdom of Betawi culture they will love and care for ondel-ondel and in the end, ondel-ondel can be inherited as a valuable culture so that future generations understand and can enjoy this cultural icon of Betawi pride.

## CONCLUSION

Ondel-ondel as Betawi Culture Icons is a form of culture displayed by the community. The ondel-ondel figure that is sacred, full of symbols and has a deep philosophical meaning should be returned. Ondel-ondel should not only be used as a tool for economic commodities, but ondel-ondel art should be displayed by their meaning. The young generation must preserve the ondel-ondel art and love the ondel-ondel art. The local government must also prepare a place for the younger generation to present ondel-ondel with philosophical meaning which should be packaged in a modern style. Ondel-ondel buskers should be coached and given space and space for them to make money by using ondel-ondel so that the impression of ondel-ondel that has been negative in the community will be rebuilt into the cultural heritage and cultural icons.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer expresses his gratitude and appreciation to all ondel-ondel buskers who have been using ondel-ondel as a commodity to make a living as narrators who do not want to be published. Because of their efforts and love for ondel-ondel, we still see ondel-ondel as an art. The author also wishes to express his gratitude to Ms. Omaswati as a Betawi art performer who has expressed her opinion about the existence of ondel-ondel which is considered a cultural destroyer, because she is an open-minded writer and thinker about the Icon of the Precious ondel-ondel culture. The author also wishes to thank all the citizens of Jakarta, especially the Betawi tribe who have provided many colors and opened insights in this study.

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