



# The Value of Local Wisdom in *Mamanda* Traditional Arts in South Kalimantan

**Faujian Esa Gumelar**

faujiansag@upi.edu

Study Program of History Education

School of Postgraduate Studies, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

**Wawan Darmawan**

wawandarmawan@upi.edu

Study Program of History Education

FPIPS, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

**Murdiyah Winarti**

murdiyahwinarti@upi.edu

Study Program of History Education

FPIPS, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

**Iing Yulianti**

iingyulianti@upi.edu

Study Program of History Education

FPIPS, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

**Abstract:** The *Mamanda* is a traditional theater or performance art originating from South Kalimantan. In its development, the younger generation's reception towards these traditional arts diminished with the massive infiltration and penetration of modern cultures in society. This paper aims to reveal the development of *Mamanda* from a historical perspective. The method used by the researcher is the historical method which includes heuristics, namely source collection, criticism or verification process of the source, interpretation consisting of explanation and interpretation, and historiography or historical writing. This study shows that *Mamanda* Performing Arts is not only seen as a means of entertainment but also contains an educational value in the form of constructive social criticism and seems relevant to the reality in society today. In addition, *Mamanda* performances are not only seen as a form of folk art that only presents expressions or plays related to folklore but also appears as a medium for preserving local wisdom values in South Kalimantan. The conclusion of this study shows *Mamanda* is a performing art that has existed for an extended period of history. Furthermore, *Mamanda* must be preserved because the performing arts are cultural products born from the history, creativity, and local values of the people in South Kalimantan, especially Banjar. It is the responsibility of the government, artists, and the public to promote the art and keep it alive for the future generation.

**Keywords:** Mamanda, traditional theater, performance arts, South Kalimantan



## Introduction

Indonesia is a country that is rich in culture. Each ethnic group that inhabits the archipelago has its distinct cultural characteristics. Every region has a myriad of cultures that color and elevate Indonesia's uniqueness in the eyes of the world. The culture can be interpreted as a local genius produced and accumulated by the nation through its long history. This national treasure follows the definition of culture in Article 32 of the Indonesian Constitution, which states that "National culture arises as a result of the efforts of the Indonesian people as a whole." The classic and original culture that exists as the peak of achievement is counted as the nation's culture. Cultural efforts must lead to the preservation of social ethic and unity (Marzali. 2014: 253).

One form of culture is local wisdom, while local wisdom is unique because every place and tribe has different local wisdom. These differences are motivated by the different needs of life and natural challenges in each region. This explanation follows what Doukhi et al. (2016: 1) expressed that local wisdom is usually manifested from generation to generation but also has uniqueness because it is not the same from one region to another. This difference is caused by adjustments to the environment in which the tribe lives and the needs needed. In Indonesia itself, local wisdom is a view of life embodied in daily life activities; its forms can vary in the form of customs, values/norms, or art with the values contained therein.

Furthermore, art is a human product expressed in the form of beauty; Ansari (1986: 116) explained that art is a human product that directly describes the face of the culture it has. The importance of art and culture in society can be seen from the messages contained in the art, which has a function to transmit historical values to the next generation. These messages can be used as guidelines for the younger generation in keeping the arts present from time to time. In terms of form, there are various kinds of arts such as traditional dance, traditional musical instruments, or traditional theater arts.

One of the traditional arts still preserved is *Mamanda*, local wisdom from South Kalimantan. The existence of *Mamanda's* art should be preserved and maintained because the challenges and efforts to preserve culture are getting more challenging, especially with the infiltration of globalism in culture and lifestyle. This situation follows Irhandayaningsih's (2018: 20) explanation that



new cultures have long affected the existing culture because of intense globalization. The impact is that the culture that comes from the ancestors is gradually being abandoned; this is what makes cultural products that come from the creativity, initiative of local communities in Indonesia begins to be abandoned by the younger generation. Based on this phenomenon, the researchers are interested in studying the "Value of Local Wisdom in *Mamanda* Traditional Art in South Kalimantan." The aim is to explore the noble values from *Mamanda* traditional theater art that can be taken and lived by the younger generation so they will have a concern and desire to preserve various kinds of art, especially traditional arts of Indonesia.

### **Literature Review**

Traditional art generally is a product of the past invented and developed by the older generation and passed from one age to another. It is still played and carried out by the people who occupied certain areas until recent times, but some may be abandoned and no longer exist in daily life today. This definition follows the opinion of Kasim Achmad in his book Lindsay on "Classic, Kitsch, Contemporary: A Study of Javanese performing arts" (1991: 40) that "traditional art is an artist whose roots have been felt as belonging to people who are in certain localities. The existing art is accepted as a form of inheritance that resembles the ideals and values of the respective society.

The art of theater is etymologically derived from the word "theatron" which means a place of performance (Padmodamarya, 1990: 2). Based on this, theater can be interpreted as any spectacle performed in front of many people. It is also following the opinion of Turahmat (2010: 2) that theater is a story about human life that is performed on stage by using supporting media such as costumes, decorations, make-up, dance, music, and singing. In this art, it is also usually made based on script scenarios.

Another theatre literature is from Stefanus Suprajitno entitled "Theatre as a Media for Community Service," which explained the function of art, which is not only seen from an aesthetic point of view but also provides messages that can train social sensitivity and a sense of community responsibility. What distinguishes Stefanus' research from that of the researcher lies in the focus of the researcher's research, which specifically seeks to examine the traditional arts of *Mamanda* in South Kalimantan.



## Methods

This research is based on a literature review using the historical method. According to Gaughan (in Wasino and Sri Hartatik, 2018: 11), the historical method can be interpreted as a systematic collection of principles and rules intended to effectively gather materials from historical sources in assessing or testing sources. The source is critical and makes a synthesis result in written form (this consists of four steps, including heuristics (collecting sources), source criticism (verifying sources), interpretation, and historiography).

Heuristics is the first stage of the historical method and the first step of the entire historical writing process. This process means effectively searching, finding, and gathering historical sources related to the subject matter of the research. This research relies on limited resources. In the sense of a limited source location, they limit the type of source and limited periodization. Source searches were carried out in several libraries in Indonesia, the West Java State Library, the Bandung City Library, the Sunda Studies Center Library in Bandung, the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia Library, and the API Stone Library in Jatinangor.

The sources used in this research are written sources. The written sources are mainly related to traditional arts, theater performing arts, and local wisdom. In analyzing the main problems related to *Mamanda's* traditional arts, the researcher uses the cultural theory of Talcott Parsons and A. L. Kroeber. They state that the form in culture cannot be separated from a set of ideas, the form of a series of actions, and the form of human patterned activity (Koentjaraningrat. 1979: 45).

## Findings

*Mamanda Traditional Theater Art History.* *Mamanda* is one of the traditional theater arts originating from South Kalimantan, especially the Banjar region. According to history, *Mamanda* is a *Badamuluk* art from a character named Abdoel Moeloek from Malacca who came to Banjarmasin in 1897. Prior to the arrival of Abdoel Moeloek's entourage in Banjarmasin, there was already a performing art known as Indra noble comedy led by Encik Ibrahim. This opinion follows the explanation of Ideham et al. (2007: 418) that *Mamanda* was created from mixing the local art of *Comedy Indra Bangsawan* in Banjar with a



new art known as *Ba Abdul Moeloek*, which later evolved to a new theatrical performing art known as *Mamanda* to this day. According to Sulistyowati (2016: 11), *Mamanda's* name arose from the king's habit of calling the vizier or Mangkubumi as "Pamanda" or "Mamanda." The word "mama" means uncle, and "nda" means honorable. So *mamanda* can be understood as "respectable uncle" or a greeting for someone respected. The term is still used to refer the performing arts of theater in South Kalimantan.

In its practice, *Mamanda* contains various elements of art. According to Sulistyowati, there are three motion elements in *Mamanda's* art: movement/play, singing, and dance. The motion of the play in *Mamanda* with monologue and dialogue is the most dominant and distinctive main element in this traditional art (2016: 11). As for distribution, the areas that recognize *Mamanda's* art include the Margasari Ilir area (Periuk, Pabaungan, Marampiau). According to Huda (2014: 67), every *Mamanda* area has changed because it is adapted to the times, as happened in the Tubau area, where there is additional material for dances and songs that are more familiar to the community.

In the case of *Mamanda's* performance itself, it is played in a central arena, meaning that the position of the performance is in the middle of the audience. According to Sulistyowati (2016: 12), the stories are taken from folk tales, sagas, history, and even new stories (composed). Furthermore, *Mamanda's* traditional art performances are often performed to celebrate weddings, celebration activities in the area, and ordinary entertainment.

*Mamanda as a Means of Entertainment and Social Criticism for Banjar People.* According to Sunarti (1978: 230-232), *Mamanda* perpetrators usually consist of 3 groups, namely the King and his subordinates, the poor, and also robbers. The existence of these three groups shows that there is layering in society. The story told in *Mamanda* is centered on a kingdom led by a wise king so that the kingdom is too prosperous and invincible. According to Sunarti, behind the kingdom's wealth, it turns out that there are still ordinary people who are poor but still have a patient and steadfast soul. In addition, there are gangs of robbers who are used to doing chaos that can threaten the order and security of the kingdom. Candra Dewi et al. (2019: 567) confirmed the story in *Mamanda* that shows the life between the king and his people that go so harmoniously. This genre is mainly reflected in the attitude of respect and devotion that the people do to their king. This loyalty and respect are not

changed even though they are in bad luck and lack wealth. The evidence of the dedication of the ordinary people to their king is the resistance carried out by one of the poor people against the bands of robbers who tried to take the wealth from the king, for his services in fighting the bands of robbers later these commoners were married to the king's son (Sunarti, 1978: 232). Indirectly, the message that can be taken from the story of *Mamanda* focuses on the selfless struggle of the people, trying to help the king even in conditions of complete deprivation.

According to Sulistyowati (2016: 13), *Mamanda* is not only seen as a traditional art in the form of entertainment but also has its symbol that is required for meaning because it gives a message that humans are cultured creatures with all their actions. In this *Mamanda*, feelings and ideas are reflected in the behavior of individuals, both ordinary people and groups in the power order. Some symbols in this *mamanda* always appear as symbols of cultural communication. This symbolization is reinforced by Jaelani (2011: 19) that the values in *mamanda* are expected to be a reference for the millennial generation in cultivating educational values. Through suitable reinforcement, the values passed down from generation to generation are still relevant for today's life.



**Figure 1.** Photo of *Mamanda's* traditional theater performance in South Kalimantan

(Source: <https://www.kulturnusantara.web.id/2018/01/article-mengenal-teater-rakyat-mamanda.html>)



*Local Wisdom Values in Mamanda.* *Mamanda's* performing arts have stories that contain much value. Values can be interpreted as things considered essential and valuable for humanity or something that perfects humans (Ministry of National Education, 2012: 963). The values that emerge from *Mamanda's* performing arts are always oriented towards harmony and cooperation. According to Sulistyowati (2016: 14), *mamanda* always describes a model of human interaction with all its positions and functions. The stage focuses on a harmonious and stable model of social order in state life. Most of *Mamanda's* story is a happy ending because of the situation of the people and their king, who consistently work together even in difficult situations. The value of cooperation and social coherence is so emphasized. Likewise, according to Candra Dewi (2019: 567), the value of cooperation shown in the *mamanda* story implies that a safe kingdom/state is created from unity and obedience towards personal and social responsibility in all levels of society. It is also implied that the people will live happy if the leader is wise enough.

According to Dokhi (2014: 1), art contains the value of local wisdom that can be used as a spiritual aspect or virtue of life that teaches humans to behave in living their lives. On the other hand, the King or leader will also wisely govern their subject if there are obedient and respectful people. According to Lalo (2018: 23), the story in *Mamanda* is needed because today's education is more concerned with intelligence and knowledge than character education. With the value contained in *Mamanda's* art, it is hoped that the millennial generation can imitate, preserve, and love traditional arts in various regions of Indonesia.

## Conclusion

*Mamanda* traditional art originates from South Kalimantan, which contains performing arts with three main elements, namely the art of motion/play, dance, and singing. *Mamanda* comes from the king's call to his vizier, which means a greeting for a respected figure. Apart from being used as entertainment such as in weddings, commemorations of significant moments, *mamanda* art is also used for social criticism. The *Mamanda's* stories are always oriented in the interaction between the King and his subordinates. For some parts, it is telling about commoners and gangs or beggars. The values that can be taken from *Mamanda* are harmony and cooperation one another in society, who bring out the side of the balance in the state and the environment.



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