

THEATER ELEMENTS OF MANDIEK ANAK IN SALAREH AIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the theatrical elements found in *mandiekanak*. *Mandiekanak* is a ritual that is part of *BaralekGadang* and only found in the Salareh Aia region. This research uses *Schechner's performance studies* approach to analyze research subjects. According to Carlson, the concept of cultural performance is used to look deeper at the events of *mandiekanak*. It also uses Dramaturgy theory to see the theatrical element while qualitative research methods collect data in *purposive* sampling. The collected data is then analyzed descriptively using ethnographic methods. The analysis results showed that the *mandiekanak* has the purpose of maintaining the family of the bride's father or *bako*, as for the theatrical elements in the form of scripts, performers, audiences, and venues. Manuscripts are rules that ensure the survival of a *mandiekanak*. The player refers to all people who are involved in it. The *mandiekanak* audience is participatory, while the place refers to the area where the *mandiekanak* exists.

Keywords: theater elements, *mandiekanak*, Salareh Aia, cultural performance

Introduction

Mandiekanak begins with a *duduak pangulu* event at the *bako* house following the meeting results at the *house of abak pisang*. It is a meeting of indigenous

elders (*niniakmamak*) at the *bako* house to decide matters related to the *mandiekanak's* event. *Duduak pangulu* is discussing who will be the leader of the entourage, *silat* players, parcel carriers, and various

other ceremonial provisions. The mandatory equipment of this ritual are *Dulang*, *badia* / rifle, *mattress*, *lapiak pandak*, *pairs of aguang*, *alam*, *bantiang* / bull, *caranoketek*, *caranogadang*, *salendang*, *pasilek galombang* (interview Dt. Marajo Lelo, June 24, 2021).

The *ritual of mandiekanak* is started or planned during *the duduaksamo awak*, where it is required to be attended by four *structures of saparuik* or called *mamak nan ampek bagi*. First *mamaksako*, second *mam akpusako*, third *mamaksakanduang*, and fourth *mamakadat*. This ceremony aims to ask the head of the clan or the chieftain to carry out the custom, namely *mandiekanak*.

On the appointed day and place, the *group of pandiek* gather to start the journey to the *anak pisang's* house immediately. Many things must be engaged in this ritual, especially structural customs, namely: a man as *penghulu/ mamak*, a lady to bring a *tray*, a man to raise a rifle, a lady carrying a *mattress*, a lady carrying a *lapiak pandak*, two women to bring pair of *aguang*, two boys to bring *alam*, a

lady to bring *carano ketek*, a lady to bring *carano gadang*, a lady to bring *salendang cloth*, and a group of *pasilek galombang* in odd number.

The sound of shooting a rifle is a mark to start the journey to the *anak pisang's* house. It will be reciprocated by *datuak* from the side of *anak pisang* from *the location of mandirikan adat*. It will be repeated every time the group enters the following village. The indigenous leaders of the region will fire the rifle as a sign that the group has obtained permission to pass. When they reach the destination, the rifle will be fired one last time, and the noises will be stopped. The elders take a predetermined place and *mamak* will order *pasilek galombang* to take the fighting position.

After the fight is over, all *babanbako* (delivered goods) will be handed over to *the anak pisang*, the *baban* will be placed in front of the aisle and opened together, and shown to the bride and groom. *Induak bako* gives the sign to the *randai* group to *maarak* (parade) the bride around the village accompanied by *talempong music*, *gandang*, and other traditional

musical instruments. Then *induk bako* will determine where the bride and groom must stop to follow the next ritual called *balimau*. After *balimau*, the group of *pandiek* will return to deliver the bride and groom to the wedding to witness *the opening of baban*.

The description of the order and ordinances of *mandiekanak* as a ritual and also a cultural performance (Carlson, 1998, p. 14) has elements such as theater that there are text, actors, places, and audiences (Harymawan, 1993, pp. 6–7; Schechner, 2007, pp. 70–72). The text referred to as *mandiekanak* ritual refers to customary rules used as ritual guidelines (Schechner, 2007). The opinion strengthens this opinion that in social ceremonies, the theatrical element can stand out as long as it has a sequence (Sahid, 2017, p. 126).

Furthermore, it is asserted that as the starting point of conversation, the relationship of theater with society has been revealed that theater is a social phenomenon. Theatre presents a social situation, a social gathering so it can be said that it is a certain social

framework involving actors as an integral part (Sahid, 2017, p. 128).

As actors, the members involved in this ritual put themselves in their respective roles. One of them is seen in *the ritual of duduk pengulu* who uses *the style of malereng* language. This style of language is a rhymed language that becomes customary to speak between *niniak mamak*. The pattern is known as *pasambahan*. In this section, participants of *duduk pangulu* play their respective characters according to a position that is completely different from their daily life. Another example is seen in *the silek galombang* section between the *pandiek* and the host groups.

The audience of this *mandiekanak* is the entire community who attend and see throughout the trip and guests who attend *alek*. In this context, the difference between actor and audience is not very noticeable. As for the place in the context of *mandiekanak* as a cultural event, located in Jorong Kampung Tengah Timur, Nagari Salareh Aia.

Research that discussed *the*

mandiekanak has not been found. The only discussion is found briefly in Wiwi Sri Nanda's thesis. In a thesis entitled *Marriage Tradition in the community of Nagari Salareh Aia Palembang Subdistrict, Agam Regency* (Sri Nanda, 2016, pp. 2–3) describes the procession of *baralekgadang* in an anthropological perspective. Wiwi Sri Nanda explained that there are two ordinances of marriage, namely according to *sharak* (religion) and custom.

The starting point of the conversation is theater's relationship with society that theater is a social phenomenon. Theatre presents a social situation, a social gathering, so it can be said that it is a specific social framework involving actors as an integral part (Sahid, 2017). It is the starting point of studying a ritual event from the theater's point of view. *Mandiekanak* as a cultural performance (Carlson 1998: 14), has elements such as a theatrical performance that is script, performer, audience, and place (Harymawan, 1993, pp. 6–7; Sathotho, 2010, p. 20; Schechner, 2007, pp. 70–72). The above quote

also strengthens the discussion of rituals in conjunction with theater using *the approach of performance studies* (Schechner, 2007, pp. xvi–xvii). In Indonesia, *performance* terminology becomes an interesting discussion because of the breadth of *performance* coverage, according to Schechner (Schechner, 2007, pp. 28–51).

Methodology

The method used in this study is qualitative. According to Suwardi Endraswara, qualitative research methods have several advantages. The advantages are adjustment of qualitative methods is more manageable when dealing with the reality of researchers, presents the nature of the relationship between researchers and respondents directly, can be more sensitive, and can adjust to many sharpening of shared influences and value patterns faced (Endraswara, 2006, p. 89).

Mandiekanak is an event that does not happen routinely. Therefore, determining to sample depends on the appropriate place and time. The most appropriate technique is using purposive sampling to

conduct research with such cases. The purposive sampling technique takes data randomly but it is based on considerations to achieve a target or focus of a particular goal. This sampling technique retrieves data from a population based on a specific target or goal in a study (Arikunto, 2006, p. 137).

Qualitative studies usually apply this purposive sampling technique. It can be said that purposive sampling techniques are very appropriately used in qualitative research compared to quantitative research. In qualitative studies that use purposive sampling, the results obtained or sampled are better to avoid generalization of the population in the study.

Results and Discussions

Mandiekanak is a form of ritual. Historically, ritual is the origin of theatre (Carlson & Shafar, 1990, p. 5). Schechner states that there is a connection between theatre and ritual so studying a ritual with a theatrical approach or vice versa is possible (Schechner & Turner, 2014, pp. 3–34). This opinion is in harmony with Turner's thinking in

From Ritual to Theater which states there is a dialogical relationship between social drama and drama on stage. The two influenced each other (Turner, 1982, pp. 73–74). Even the traditional theater in Indonesia is still synonymous with rituals (Bandem & Murgianto, 1996, p. 13).

In *the Sociology of Theatre*, Sahid states that as a starting point of conversation, theatre's relationship with society has been revealed that theater is a social phenomenon. Theatre presents a social situation, a social gathering, so it can be said that it is a particular social framework involving actors as an integral part (Sahid, 2017, p. 128).

The above exposure shows that *the mandiekanak* as a cultural performance (Carlson, 1998, p. 14) has elements such as a theatrical performance that is script, performer, audience, and place (Harymawan, 1993, pp. 6–7; Sathotho, 2010, p. 20; Schechner, 2007, pp. 70–72).

Here is exposure to the theatrical elements that exist in *the ritual of mandiekanak*.

a. Text

In *the Sociology of Theatre*, Nur Sahid underlines

that as long as a ritual has clear rules, the elements of theater are visible (Sahid, 2017, p. 126). Schechner also explained that one of the characteristics of a show is the existence of rules (Schechner, 2007, p. 8). While according to I Made Bandem and Sal Murgiyanto, one of the characteristics of traditional theater is a script that tends not to be written strictly or even not written at all (Bandem & Murgiyanto, 1996, p. 13).

These three opinions can be correlated with the reality of *the mandiekanak* in SalarehAia. As a cultural event, *mandiekanak* has specific rules and sequences. It can be analogous to a script in a theater performance. Although unwritten, the rules are closely binding on the players involved.

Following the unwritten nature of the text, then there will be many possibilities to adjust to the circumstances. In *the mandiekanak* that was a sample of the study, it was found that the bride had two fathers: one biological father and one

stepfather. The bride's mother had been married twice.

The problem arises when both families of the bride's father intend to hold a *mandiekanak* on the same day, *basandiang* day. It turns out that each wants to be the first group to come to *the baralekgadang* event. After going through various considerations, it was finally decided that the *pandiek* group from the biological father's family became the first group to be welcomed by *pitunggualek* (interview Dt. Marajo Lelo June 22, 2021, 11.00 WIB).

The above incident shows that there is an improvised space in the series of *the mandiekanak* event. If usually a *pitunggualek* will only welcome one group, there are two *pitunggualek* prepared by the host. Each *pitunggualek* is assigned to welcome *pandiek* from the family of his biological father and stepfather. The decision to change this custom proves that this manuscript is

one of the common features of traditional theater (Bandem & Murgianto, 1996, p. 13).

In the context of the *Misra family's mandiekanak*, as a *pandiek*, a very significant improvisation was the decision to precede the arrival of *pandiek* from the stepfather's family. Although it happens suddenly, *pitunggualek* can still do its obligations well. *Pitunggualek* can adjust to the biological father's side comes first.

In addition, as with a traditional theater script, *the ritual of mandiekanak* gives space to several alternative stories that adapt to the circumstances in the field. One of them is *bantiang* or cow as a mandatory condition of *bako's* delivery goods can be replaced with gold bracelets. However, the gold bracelet should be like a *bantiang* with a scarf (interview Dt. Marajo Lelo, June 24, 2021, 20.00 WIB)

The rules in the *mandiekanak* can be parsed and written as a framework performance or

treatment of a script with a three-act structure. This structure consists of Act I (beginning of conflict and introduction of figures, Act II (middle of problem complications, temporary resolution of major conflicts, resolution of minor conflicts), Act III (end of resolution of major problems, resolution of other problems) (Wibowo, 2016, p. 60).

In addition, the script in general for the series of events in *the mandiekanak*, (events that precede, exist in, or after) has more detailed rules. For example, in determining who should be a *kitchen chef* and the food that must be cooked. In *duduak pangulu* some rules govern anyone who can talk, or what food should be in the event. These rules also appeared at the time of *manyu dahialek* (end of the party) (interview Dt. Marajo Lelo June 24, 2021, 20.00 WIB).

b. Actor

Theatre presents a social situation, a social gathering so it

can be said that it is a certain social framework involving actors as an integral part (Sahid, 2017, p. 128). Even in daily life, humans tend to play a role. A person will adjust to various conditions by changing his appearance. In almost every interaction of fellow humans, there will be performance behavior. In these circumstances, humans will try to give the desired impression and try to read or interpret the appearance and attitude of the interlocutor. This opinion is strengthened by Schechner, who states that the awareness of being someone else also occurs in a ritual process (Schechner, 1985, pp. 3–34).

Both opinions strongly support the argument that *the ritual of mandiekanak* has actors who run it. The statement reinforces that all behavior in front of others and their influence is a performance (Murgiyanto, 2018, pp. 23–24). This situation is not like when a theater player plays a specific character. In this situation, there

is a transformation of the consciousness of the cast. In everyday life, a person who is a farmer will turn into a character he plays. In some parts of this ritual, there are positions in the event made figures. Examples include *pitunggualek*, *datuak*, and *bako*.

Awareness to play a role occurs in all stages of *the mandiekanak* process. Although a *mandiekanak* is not a routine event that occurs at the right time, the circumstances during this process always bring the cast to relatively similar situations and circumstances in the context of a performance. This situation creates a condition or agreement that limits or creates circumstances when an activity is carried out repeatedly (Murgiyanto, 2018, pp. 23–24). When the *mandiekanak* takes place, the work frame (Murgiyanto, 2018, pp. 23–24), which Goffman means, is seen by how people behave, act, and talk when they enter a particular work-frame event.

c. Audience

One of the conditions of an event that can be said to be a performance is the presence of an audience (Schechner, 1985, pp. 70–72). The audience in *the ritual mandiekanak* as a cultural performance is primarily locals. They come not as passive spectators who are often found while enjoying performances on stage. Instead, there is an interaction between the audience and the player (Schechner, 1985, pp. 70–72).

They also make sure that the event is following the rules that are trusted together. Much like a traditional show, audiences here come to confirm a story they both understand and regard as common property (Kayam, 1999, pp. 289–290). They come to see as part of the *mandiekanak* offender. Therefore, they come as engaged spectators (Sathotho, 2010, p. 21).

In the group of *mandiekanak* and the nuclear family, there is also a group that is especially *supported* to

accompany *bako* to the house of the *anak pisang*. This group brings *baban* to show the existence in its social environment. This group came willingly after being *panggia* customarily by *bako* using *siriah langkok*. As a group that accompanies *bako*, *baban carriers* also are interested in watching the procession of *mandiekanak*.

During the performance, the audience along the way will participate in enlivening the event by responding to the players, especially to the hosts of *aguang* and *pasilek galombang*. The audience will dance to the rhythm of the instrument. The more noise the musicians generate, the more the audience will be. Interactions like this are very reasonable to be found at *mandie kanak* events. Even in some cases, these spectators accompanied the *pandiek* troupe. and watch until the show is over to see *the silek galombang*. To get more spectators, *bako* will consider hiring the famous *silek*

alombang player in the neighborhood.

The community is enthusiastic when watching *the pasambahan kuak padang* which at this time is rarely displayed. *Pasambahan kuak padang* becomes interesting for the community because it is different from *pasambahan* in general. The difference is that this *pasambahan* allows the audience to participate throughout the *pasambahan*. It is the opening or welcome from *the pananti* to the *pandiek*. It is done in the middle of the road and witnessed by all circles. *Pitunggaaalek*, who performs *pasambahan* will invite the audience to participate in throwing questions and discussing throughout the *pasambahan*.

As explained in the previous chapter, *baban* is a *bako* delivery item. The higher the value of *baban* brought, the higher the social value obtained by the bearer of *baban*. Watching the opening of this *baban* has its value and meaning

for its audience. Not infrequently also *bako* will specifically consider the music players and players of *silek galombang* who have good playing hours in the village so that more people watch the opening of *baban*.

The audience came to the self-legitimacy that they were part of the event. At the same time, they came for self-legitimacy as part of society. In other words, a *mandie kanak* is a tool to generate solidarity among their neighbors (Kayam, 1999, pp. 289–290)

d. Place

The place in the *mandiekanak* is in Kampung Tengah Timur. This place is limiting (Sathotho, 2010, p. 20) whether or not *mandiekanak* occurs. As explained in the previous chapter, the *mandiekanak* is only carried out in the Area of *Langgam Saripado*. As a place that surrounds the *mandiekanak*, *Langgam Saripado* is very influential on the shape of the *mandiekanak* itself. Areas in the

form of hills and residential groups that are far apart should be suspected to cause the need for the eruption of rifles as a sign when the group departs or at certain moments during the trip. In the context of the performance, Langgam Saripado became the stage for implementing the *mandiekanak*. As a stage, the residents of Langgam Saripado become aware that things happen that do not happen in everyday life during the performance. The village road through which the *pandiek* group passed will immediately turn into a stage and not be disturbed by the passing of vehicles.

Conclusion

As a performance, *mandiekanak* has the forming elements of theater. Elements of theater in *mandiekanak* are text, actors, audiences, and place. The text refers to several rules that guarantee the running of the event in question. The rules are not written but instead passed down from generation to generation orally and in action. The

rules are not rigid and have room for adjustment to current circumstances. If written in the form of treatment, it is seen that the *mandiekanak* has a dramatic structure as a three-act drama.

The actor is represented by indigenous elders who carry out their role in child bathing. The elders and participants of the *mandiekanak* and community members are associated with the event release daily life and turn into a specific character. These are not those who appear in daily life. The participants of the daily ceremony are farmers, traders, and various other professions. At the time of the ritual, they turn into *datuak*, *sumando*, *pitunggualek*, and many others.

The audience that sees the ritual of *mandiekanak* is not a passive spectator. They do not sit and watch the show as they watch inside the theater building. The audience in this event is active. They are involved in determining the direction of the show. Often, they participate in dancing or responding to what is happening at an ongoing event. The place in the context of *mandiekanak* refers to the place that

is the location of this ritual. The place refers to something very spacious because the *mandiekanak* has a stage that includes roads and several villages. The stage can be identified in similarities with performances of traditional theater that have a non-binding stage.

Mandiekanak is a cultural event with a certain function for the supporting community. As a cultural performance, its main function is to transmit the cultural values of its supporting communities. These values are wrapped in various events during *mandiekanak*. On many occasions, people may not realize that their involvement is directly or indirectly a learning process. This process becomes a reference for the community for reference when they will later do similar events.

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