



Beyond Tradition: Lenong Revitalisation as a Model for Teaching Betawi Cultural Arts

"Buaye kurus mencari makan

Melateh di waktu pagi

Budaya betawi harus dilestarikan dan dikembangkan

Kalau bukan kite siapa lagi"

Lenong is a traditional Betawi art-form that has been known since the early 20th century. As one of the folk theatre art-forms, Lenong is not only a means of entertainment but also provides education to the community. One type of Lenong, namely Lenong Preman, is a performance with an element of two-way communication between the actor and the audience. This element of communication then becomes one of Lenong's strengths, especially in creating a space for dialogue to raise social issues that exist in everyday life.

The DKI Jakarta Provincial Government has made various efforts to preserve Betawi Culture, one of which is by making policies that regulate the

preservation of Betawi Culture, namely Regional Regulation of DKI Jakarta Province Number 4 of 2015 concerning the Preservation of Betawi Culture and later reduced to Regulation of the Governor of DKI Jakarta Number 229 of 2016 concerning the Implementation of Betawi Cultural Preservation.

Unfortunately, there are still challenges in preserving Betawi Culture. Several cultural artists claim that the Betawi performing arts have become uninteresting, which has decreased their appeal to young people and reduced public awareness. The future challenge that Lenong art will face is how to create a performance, especially one that requires

interaction between actors and audiences, especially in digital platforms.

In response to this issue, several artists, young people, and parents discussed ways to address this challenge. The discussion resulted in several agreements, namely adding new elements or things to give Lenong a strong, modern impression, but without abandoning the features and rules that are distinctive to Lenong. The Lenong performance will combine several Betawi cultural forms, namely Lenong, Gambang Kromong, Pantun (Rhyme), dance, and Maen Pukul (Martial Arts). Second, to attract the interest of young people, Lenong needs to maximise its strength in actively involving young people in the Lenong performing arts. Third, create Lenong performances in different forms, namely online and offline, as well as using multimedia so that you can continue to follow developments in the digital world. The three results of these discussions were then developed into a model, called the "Beyond Tradition" Model. The development of this model is also supported by the regional government of DKI Jakarta Province, especially the East Jakarta Administrative City.

The model depicts five stages before the Lenong performance. **The first stage is to convene Betawi arts practitioners (Lenong, Gambang Kromong, Pantun (Rhyme), dance, and Maen Pukul (Martial Arts) to jointly discuss and design all the activities that will be carried out until the performance.** All activities are designed to be safe, friendly, and fun for young people. **The second stage is to hold auditions for young people who are interested in being involved in this Lenong performance.** In the audition process, the extent to which young people know various forms of Betawi culture, especially Lenong, will also be explored. After the audition, **the third stage is Betawi cultural arts training which includes Lenong, Gambang Kromong, Pantun (Rhyme), dance, and Maen Pukul (Martial Arts).** Young people involved in this program will learn about all forms of Betawi culture, both in terms of knowledge and skills or practice. The aim is for them to understand the philosophy behind the various existing cultural forms but also be able to concretely develop skills related to these cultural forms. **The fourth stage is to train young people in dramaturgical and aesthetic aspects of performing arts.** This is also part of the revitalization of Lenong so that Lenong performers can strengthen their character and appearance by mastering the basics of theatre and aesthetics.

The fifth stage is that young people actively make preparations for the performance. They develop the script and arrange technical matters in the performance. The scripts developed would come from issues or problems they encounter daily and they would research the issues further to strengthen the story. The role of artists or other adults is to facilitate and be in dialogues to help young people prepare for performances.

In this long process, what is also important is psychosocial assistance or support and character development. Young people involved in this program are allowed to carry out activities together, consult with psychologists or counsellors when they are affected by the issues or process, regularly submit their feedback and reflections during training, and carry out various activities to get to know themselves and others. This is important so that they can learn to build positive relationships with other people and create a safe and pleasant atmosphere for all parties involved. To be able to build on this, parents are also invited to discuss together the role and support that parents can provide to their children so that they can go through the whole process smoothly.

All activities in this program are documented in the form of photos and videos and a documentary film will be made describing all stages from the beginning until the performance takes place. This documentation is made by a group of young people who have together practised how to document activities in the form of photos and videos as well as making documentary films. During this documentation process, young people are mentored by artists in the fields of photos, videos, and films.

*"Beli ikan, ikan tenggiri
Gak dijaga dimakan kucing
Mari idolakan budaya sendiri
Jangan mau kalah dengan budaya asing"*

This model was developed with:

