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## **Local Wisdom in the Tradition of Circumcision and the Art of Petan Wewe Prisen Serang Banten: A Study of Religion, Iconography, and Iconology**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the research is to explore and analyze the local wisdom of the Prisen Kiara community, especially in the context of the circumcision tradition implemented through the performing arts of Petan Wewe in Serang, Banten. This section introduces the background and importance of preserving local cultural heritage amid globalization and new media. The research method involves descriptive, religious, iconography, and iconology approaches, as well as qualitative analysis of Petan Wewe performing arts practices and circumcision traditions in Prisen Kiara. Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The study's results show that Petan Wewe's performing arts are integrated with the tradition of circumcision. This tradition not only marks circumcision but also serves as a means to teach the values of togetherness, loyalty, and spirituality. This section provides an in-depth overview of the findings. The discussion focused on the implications of the research findings for the sustainability of local wisdom and on how the Prisen Kiara community maintains and inherits its cultural heritage through performing arts. Ethical considerations and local values are the focus of the discussion to appreciate and understand the uniqueness of Petan Wewe art. This study concludes that Petan Wewe's performing arts not only serve as entertainment but also function as a medium that enriches and maintains local values in the circumcision tradition. The conclusion also includes recommendations to preserve Prisen Kiara's local wisdom through a more effective approach to art and culture.

**Keywords:** Circumcision tradition, Petan Wewe, Religion, Iconography, Iconology.

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## INTRODUCTION

Cultural arts in Indonesia, especially in the Banten region, display rich and diverse cultural expressions (Susanti & Lestari, 2021). However, the richness of this cultural element also highlights the potential risks of certain art forms that face extinction and changes in cultural objects from the past to the present, contributing to deep insights, namely, human interaction with their environment, to expressing human existence itself, and, of course, adapting to changing circumstances (Nurchotimah et al., 2023). Therefore, there must be a strong appreciation for Indonesian cultural arts so that they are not eroded by foreign culture or endangered. Fortunately, the Prisen Kiara community remains the guardian of local wisdom through a combination of circumcision traditions and Petan Wewe performing arts, which help ensure its survival. This performing art, located in Prisen Kiara, is not only considered entertainment, but also as a means of respecting the circumcision tradition, which has deep meaning and unique cultural values (Humaeni, 2015; Nasir, 2019). Petan Wewe, as a manifestation of performing arts in the context of traditional circumcision, not only celebrates the moment of circumcision but also serves as a forum for teaching values of togetherness, loyalty, and spirituality.

Petan Wewe reflects the local wisdom of the Prisen Kiara community by incorporating elements of ceremonies and rituals into their daily lives. This tradition involves collaboration between residents in its preparation and implementation, creating valuable moments for the entire community (Utaridah, 2019). The performance is practiced on the streets of the village and then in the city of Serang. Literally, Petan Wewe can be interpreted as a doll (petan) ghost (wewe), a meaning identical to ghosts for young children, which can be scary. One of the distinctive features of Petan Wewe is the use of incense as a transcendent symbol, creating a connection between humans and God (Al Ayubi & Alif, 2021). This reflects the Prisen Kiara people's belief in the importance of a balance between humans and God in their lives. By preserving and preserving the tradition of Petan Wewe, the Prisen Kiara people not only take care of their cultural heritage, but also respect the noble values that are the basis of their lives (Fitriyah et al., 2016). Through this traditional performance, they strive to pass on these values to the next generation, so that their local wisdom continues to be maintained and developed in the midst of changing times (Awaliah et al., 2024).

However, amid globalization and new media, traditions that have almost disappeared are faced with new media. The Petan Wewe tradition can add color to local culture. In this research exploration, researchers will investigate the variety of performing arts in Petan Wewe, outlining the role of art in celebrating and commemorating traditional circumcision. By digging deeper into the local wisdom reflected in this performing art, we can understand how Prisen Kiara preserve and inherit their cultural heritage, as well as maintain a balance between tradition and creativity in every step. In-depth research is needed into

the symbolic meaning of the circumcision custom and the Petan Wewe performing arts, so that the younger generation not only watches the performance but also understands its value and meaning.

Petan Wewe shows an interesting visual to be studied from a religious, iconographic, and iconological perspective because it has the character of cultural and artistic traditions (Chang, 2023). In addition, because of the use of religious symbols and visual motifs in the emergence of Petan Wewe, this study can also be associated with various socio-cultural contexts that emerged alongside it. As the cornerstone of this moment, a powerful myth has become the most valuable reference for leaders of the country's widely accepted cultural iconography to commemorate this event.

This study aims to analyze the impact of the Petan Wewe tradition in facing the current of globalization and maintaining local wisdom, namely: (1) to identify the circumcision tradition that affects social life, (2) to identify various visual forms of performing arts in Petan Wewe to explore the traditional cultural values of Petan Wewe that may be less known by the community. (3) Identifying the Elements of Magi in the Art of Petan Wewe. (4) Revealing the symbolic meaning of the early tradition in Petan Wewe Art. (5) Forming the character and value of local wisdom as part of the traditional norms of Petan Wewe.

This research contributes as follows: (a) Providing insight into and a study of art and cultural traditions in Banten society today. (b) Contribution to the understanding and essence of the people of Banten, especially in performing arts. (c) Scientific development of social sciences, anthropology, and religion.

## **METHOD**

Qualitative research was used to explore local wisdom in the tradition of circumcision and performing arts of Petan Wewe in Prisen Kiara, Serang, Banten. This approach allows for a deep understanding of the tradition's symbolic and religious meanings. The stages of the study are as follows:

**Participatory Observation:** Researchers will be directly involved in the traditional activities of circumcision and Petan Wewe performances. Participatory observation allows researchers to observe ceremonies and performances in action, record key details, and understand the social and cultural dynamics at play. Furthermore, In-depth interviews will be conducted with various key informants, including traditional leaders, Petan Wewe art practitioners, parents of circumcised children, and other community members. This interview aims to explore their understanding of the meaning and value of the tradition and performance.

The researcher will identify symbols and visual elements in the tradition of circumcision and the performing arts of Petan Wewe, including costumes, musical instruments, stage props, dance movements, and other elements. **Iconographic Analysis:** Each identified visual element will be analyzed to

understand its symbolic meaning. This analysis involves tracing the historical background, function, and representation of symbols in the context of local culture. It is then interpreted through the concept of Iconology: that is, the interpretation examines the deep meaning of the symbols. This analysis will connect the symbols to a broader social, historical, and religious context, uncovering how they reflect community values and religious understanding.

The next approach is the study of Religious Literature, that is, the researcher will study religious texts and other relevant literature to understand how religious values are applied in the tradition of circumcision and the art of Petan Wewe. The researcher will analyze the religious aspects of the circumcision tradition, including prayers, rituals, and symbols. This analysis will show how religious practices frame and give meaning to these traditions.

Photos and videos will be taken during the tradition's implementation and performances to document its visual and symbolic elements. This documentation will be used as material for iconography and iconographic analysis. Researchers will likely record field findings and observations. These records will be the basis for data analysis.

This research is located in the Prisen Neighborhood, Kiara Village, Serang Regency, Banten Province. Prisen Kiara is known as the center of local traditions and culture, which is still thick with strong religious nuances and customs. As an agrarian society, the village has a close attachment to nature and various activities that integrate spiritual, cultural, and economic elements of the local economy. This village is historically and culturally important, especially in the tradition of circumcision accompanied by the art of Petan Wewe. Traditional ceremonies like this involve the entire village community and emphasize mutual cooperation, strengthening social ties among residents. Traditional and religious leaders play a major role in maintaining the sustainability of traditions, which shows the harmony between Islam and local traditions. Prisen Kiara's remote geography favors the preservation of traditions, despite the challenges of accessibility. The beautiful natural landscape, with rice paddies and flowing rivers, emphasizes the community's close relationship with nature, which is seen as a source of life and a spiritual entity. Research at this site offers insights into the complex interactions between religion, tradition, and nature, as well as how societies maintain their cultural identities amid changing times.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Petan Wewe Prisen Art**

Petan Wewe Prisen art is one of the unique and distinctive traditional art streams of the people of Serang, Banten. As one of the elements of local cultural heritage that has existed for a long time, this art is often associated with a number of customs, such as circumcision rituals (Nurhasanah et al., 2023). Petan Wewe Prisen is a collection of district names that are characteristic of

movement, sound, and symbol in this art. This art combines elements of dance, music, and theater to entertain the community while conveying spiritual and moral teachings.

Its history can be traced back to the early days of Islam's arrival in Banten. Many of these traditional practices have been used by Islamic scholars and adherents as a means of da'wah so far. Art is used to attract public attention and explain religious teachings in an easy-to-understand way (Hasanah et al., 2024). Spreading religious messages in the midst of traditional societies that still hold fast to customs, thanks to the correlation between entertainment and spirituality elements, Petan Wewe Prisen art can be an effective medium (Ahmad, 2020).

Apart from being a da'wah tool, the meaning of Petan Wewe Prisen art is also closely related to religious values and local customs (Karmila et al., 2016). Movements in dance and sounds from traditional musical instruments such as drums, gongs, flying gede, and tambourines shape the harmony of the relationship between humans and nature. The symbols used in this sentence often refer to religious elements, such as prayers, prayers that are prayed, which are believed to have special powers and spiritual qualities in the life of the people of Serang (Schlieter, 2017). The importance of cooperation, teamwork, and mutual respect among community members.

Religious events, such as circumcision, and government-organized events, such as Independence Day, often showcase Petan Wewe Prisen's art. Usually, the square or household yard where the event is held is a common location for this show. For example, the main entertainment in circumcision events is the art of Petan Wewe Prisen, which serves as a means to provide prayers and hopes for circumcised children, in addition to entertaining invited guests (Rosyid & Lina Kushidayati, 2022). After the circumcision procedure, this art is believed to bring good luck.

According to iconography, Petan Wewe Prisen contains various symbols that reflect the way of life of the people of Serang. The puppet is dressed in traditional clothing but has a colorful face. In addition, both dancers and music personnel are adorned in colorful attire, with Bisan clothes worn (Karmila et al., 2016). Masks or face ornaments used by the Wewe people are white and red and also represent characters such as heroes, motherhood, and supernatural creatures from folklore or myths. These symbols serve as tools to convey moral lessons and admonitions passed down from one generation to the next (Cavrak & Kleider-Offutt, 2015; Palmer et al., 2013).

In terms of iconology, Wewe Prisen Petan Art is more akin to entertainment. This study examines the social and spiritual characteristics of the people of Banten (Nuryanto et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2024). Every conversation and debate in such entertainment has a deeper meaning, especially related to man's relationship with God. This is considered a method for achieving cosmic balance, in which humans must always maintain harmony

between the material and spiritual worlds. Therefore, this is often accompanied by actions or spells believed to bring spiritual strength into daily life.

According to Jenuri (2024b) Even though it has been going on for a long time, Petan Wewe Prisen continues to adapt to "the times." Currently, this art is displayed not only in religious ceremonies but also at official events and cultural festivals organized by the local government. This shows that Wewe Prisen Petan Art still has many enthusiasts, both among local residents and visitors from other areas. However, there are still challenges to overcome, especially amid modernization and globalization trends that lower everyone's standard of living. The art of Petan Wewe Prisen is one of the forms of "local wisdom" that must be preserved and upheld by the people of Serang. Petan Wewe Prisen Art serves as a guideline for strengthening religious and cultural identity, in addition to serving as an entertainment medium. Thus, the people of Serang not only preserve their ancestors but also ensure that the nobility they embody remains relevant and understood by future generations.

### **Elements of Petan Wewe Art**

Petan Wewe, a cultural heritage rich in beauty and meaning, presents beautiful performances with various artistic components. An in-depth lesson on life, the cosmos, and society's grand ideals lies behind every dance move, musical note, and fashion detail. Mask, the entrance to Petan Wewe's magical world, is through the mask. In addition to altering the dancers' appearances, these intricately carved wooden faces serve as a vehicle for expressing various personalities and feelings. Each mask has a unique background and meaning, representing various mythological and folklore characters. The dancers' clothes are also artistic creations. Each element, including accessories, colors, and fabrics, is carefully selected to depict the character's personality, social standing, and even superhuman abilities. In addition to its beauty, this intricate and luxurious outfit serves a profound symbolic purpose. The essence of Petan Wewe's performance is the music. The audience was hypnotized by the mystical, enchanting atmosphere created by the sounds of Flying Gede, gamelan, drums, and gongs. The audience is also carried away into the story conveyed through a unique rhythm and melody, which is evocative (Jenuri, 2024b).

Dance is a form of body language that can convey feelings and messages. Beautiful acting, along with expressive and dynamic dance moves, brings the characters in the story to life. Each movement has a symbolic connotation related to the narrative being told. The audience and the story are connected through the dancers' delivery of the text. Discourse, whether presented in the form of prose, songs, or rhymes, covers the history of society as well as admirable moral lessons and ideals. In addition, the text advances the plot and enhances the characters' personalities. The ideal finishing touch to a dancer's image is makeup. In addition to beautifying the face, the use of certain patterns,

shapes, and designs in facial makeup can lend each character its own distinct characteristics. Performance properties, such as weaponry, conventional musical instruments, or mystical objects, play an important role in advancing the storyline and providing an alluring imagery. Each feature has a symbolic connotation associated with the story's performance (Marsim, 2024b).

This is where Petan Wewe's story comes to life on stage. The atmosphere that complements the story is created by effective staging, lighting, and decoration. Petan Wewe's performance would not exist without an audience. A vibrant atmosphere is generated by the interaction between players and the audience. In addition to watching, the audience also contributes to the show's success. The rituals before and after the performance have a deep spiritual meaning. The purpose of this ceremony is to invoke the blessings, protection, and success of the performance. The main inspiration for the Petan Wewe script comes from folklore. These stories exemplify admirable qualities such as courage, integrity, and empathy. Another great source of inspiration is mythology. Gods, goddesses, and spirits are examples of mythological characters who often serve as the main characters in the show. In Petan Wewe, symbolism is a universal language. Each component has a deep symbolic meaning, including color, shape, movement, and quality (Jenuri, 2024b).

Petan Wewe's role in society is very important. Apart from being entertainment, this performing art also functions as an educational medium, social glue, and cultural preservation. The evolution of Petan Wewe's artwork over the years demonstrates its vitality and adaptability. Nevertheless, its cultural roots and traditional values are still upheld.

### **Rituals in Petan Wewe Performances**

According to Jenuri and Marsim (2024b) The ritual in Petan Wewe's performance plays a very important role in connecting the human world with the spirit world. These ritual actions carry deep symbolic meaning and aim to create a sacred atmosphere and to invoke blessings from ancestors and supernatural powers.

- 1) **Ritual Preparation:** Before the staging begins, ritual preparations are usually carried out involving the entire cast and crew. This preparation includes self-cleansing, offerings, and special prayers.
- 2) **Time Selection:** The time of the Petan Wewe performance is often chosen based on astrology calculations or the traditional calendar. Certain times are considered more sacred and have a strong energy that lends itself to holding a show.
- 3) **Venue Selection:** The staging venue is also specially selected. Usually, the chosen places are considered sacred or have historical value to the local community.
- 4) **Offerings:** Offerings are offerings in the form of food, drinks, and meaningful objects that are offered to ancestors or supernatural spirits.

This offering is believed to invite the spirits' presence and to bestow blessings on the players and spectators.

- 5) Prayer: Prayer is an important part of the Petan Wewe ritual. The prayers chanted aim to ask for protection, success, and safety during the performance.
- 6) Ritual Dance/Pencak sialt: Before the main performance begins, a ritual dance is often performed involving the entire cast. This dance has sacred movements and contains deep symbolic meaning.
- 7) Use of Masks: Masks in Petan Wewe not only serve as a tool to change appearances, but also as a medium to communicate with the spirit world. Masks are considered gateways to the supernatural world.
- 8) Sacred Music: The music that accompanies ritual dances usually has a slow tempo and a mystical melody. This music is believed to create a solemn atmosphere and invite the presence of supernatural spirits.
- 9) Respect for Ancestors: During staging, the performers often pay homage to ancestors. This reverence can be in the form of a special dance, a mantra recitation, or an offering.

After the performance, a closing ritual is usually held to thank the ancestors and supernatural spirits who have been present. This closing ritual also aims to restore cosmic balance.

### **Religious Aspects in the Circumcision Tradition**

The tradition of circumcision is one of the important practices in the life of Muslim communities, including in Serang, Banten. Circumcision, or *khitan*, is not only a medical procedure, but it also has profound religious and social significance (Eldine, 2022). In the context of the Serang community, this ritual is one way to express religious and cultural identity. "Circumcision is a symbol of devotion to God and recognition of religious teachings," said a religious figure in Serang. Circumcision rituals in boys usually take place at a certain age, often on the eve of puberty. Circumcision is considered a *sunnah* in Islamic history, advocated by the Prophet Muhammad. This shows how circumcision is a religious requirement that binds members of the Muslim community together. "Circumcision is a barrier between children and sin," said a local cleric. As a result, this ritual has spiritual and moral significance in addition to being a ceremony.

In Serang, circumcision has a significant cultural component in addition to its religious significance. This ceremony is often carried out in a lively manner by involving family, neighbors, and the community. Events involving circumcision typically include a variety of activities, including joint prayers, religious studies, and feeding guests. "This activity is not only for children who are circumcised, but also to strengthen social relations between residents," said a local resident. Thus, circumcision is an important moment to build community cohesion. In Serang, the circumcision ceremony is often interpreted as a sign of

transition from youth to adulthood. Through this procedure, children are considered ready to take on greater religious responsibilities. "When a child is circumcised, they are expected to better understand and practice religious teachings," said a teacher. Therefore, circumcision involves both an identity change and an event (Jenuri, 2024a).

The role played by religious leaders in the practice of circumcision is an interesting aspect of the custom. Religious leaders who lead prayers and provide guidance to families, such as a kyai or an ustaz, are often personally involved in these ceremonies. "We believe that blessings from God will flow through the prayers that are recited during circumcision," added Kyai. This shows the importance of the spiritual component in the Serang people's circumcision custom. The circumcision ceremony also blends various art performances, such as dance and music, within an artistic and aesthetic framework. Circumcision events often feature Petan Wewe art performances, which are part of local culture. "Art and ritual complement each other, creating an atmosphere full of meaning and harmony," said one creator. As a result, circumcision is one way to preserve religious beliefs while displaying the beauty of local culture (Marsim, 2024a).

Its impact on the younger generation increasingly shows the importance of circumcision rituals in shaping the religious identity of the people of Serang. Children learn about cultural and religious values through their participation in this event. "This ritual is a valuable lesson for the younger generation, that they are part of a larger history and tradition." (Marsim, 2024a). In this case, the adverse impact is not only detrimental to the individual but also to the community's long-term cultural continuity. In addition, circumcision is often used to improve relations between local residents. The planning and implementation of these activities usually involves cooperation between neighbors and families. One community leader stated, "When we come together to help, we create a sense of belonging and solidarity in the community." This shows how, in everyday life, circumcision functions as a social bond.

Nevertheless, even though it has many positive connotations, circumcision is not without difficulties and modifications. The way people carry out this custom is often influenced by globalization and other cultural influences. A young man involved in religious activities stated, "We must be smart to adapt without losing the essence of this ritual." This shows the need for discussion and introspection to maintain the continuity of tradition in an ever-changing environment. It is impossible to ignore the role of local knowledge in circumcision ceremonies. The practice of circumcision retains many traditional aspects, such as the use of regional delicacies in culinary preparations. "Local wisdom helps us maintain a relationship with nature and our ancestors," said a village elder. This shows how circumcision has significant ecological and religious significance (Prayogi & Danial, 2016).

The fact that every member of the community participates in the

circumcision ceremony shows how universal this custom is. Bu Ika said (2024) "We celebrate togetherness, not just child circumcision." As a result, members of the community form close bonds, and everyone plays a role in upholding those customs. The religious identity of the Serang community is also further strengthened through the tradition of circumcision. This ritual is one of the ways to show love and devotion to religion. "Through circumcision, we affirm that we are Muslims who follow the sunnah of the Prophet," said a teenager. Thus, circumcision serves as a reminder of each individual's spiritual commitment to the community. Finally, the meeting of religion, culture, and society is reflected in the circumcision ritual in Serang. In addition to being physical, this practice is an expression of profound values. Circumcision becomes a symbol of deep meaning when combined with elements such as spirituality and art. "We are not only circumcising children, but also celebrating our identity as a religious and cultured society," an elected official said.

A vivid illustration of how religious rituals can shape a society's cultural and social identity is the circumcision custom in Serang, Banten. The community as a whole benefits from this ceremony in addition to the circumcised person. The people of Serang affirm their adherence to religious teachings and celebrate and protect their cultural history through circumcision.

### **Iconography in Petan Wewe Prisen Art: Analysis of Symbols and Representations of Cultural and Spiritual Values**

One of the traditional art forms rich in meaning is Petan Wewe Prisen, from Prisen Kiara, Serang, Banten. This art expresses the spiritual and cultural values of the local community as part of the customs, especially in terms of circumcision rituals (Prayogi & Danial, 2016). The interaction between humans, society, and God is reflected in the iconography of Petan Wewe art, which also highlights the close relationship with ancestral customs. The deep meaning of the symbols found in these artworks often serves as a means of conveying religious and moral lessons to viewers (Isnart, 2020).

The study of the meaning of visual symbols in art and culture is known as iconography. Visual elements drawn from local mythology, religious traditions, and the environment are among the symbols used in Petan Wewe Prisen's art. Iconography examines how images are interpreted in the social and cultural environment in which they are created (Pettersson, 2001; Sartini, 2024). In this case, Petan Wewe's art is a ritual with deep symbolic value, as well as a form of visual enjoyment. Natural symbols such as water and animals are often featured in Petan Wewe's art. Bukhur, for example, is often interpreted as a symbol of union with God. In Banten, water is often associated with natural forces that are believed to provide protection. "Bukhur in traditional art is often a symbol of eternity, smoothness, and the connection between the human world and the supernatural," said Syamsul in "Traditional Art and Its Symbolic Meaning". In this bukhur, bukhur in Petan Wewe art represents the spiritual relationship

between humans, the creator, and the universe (Marsim, 2024b).

In Petan Wewe Prisen, the water symbol is often associated with spiritual purification and purity. Because it is considered capable of atoning for sins and enlightening the soul, air plays an important role in many religious rituals, including circumcision. In the Banten tradition, "Banten water symbolizes purification and purity, which serves to cleanse one's soul before entering a new chapter of life." Watermarks in Petan Wewe's art symbolize the spiritual side of a child's life journey. Petan Wewe's artistic symbolism draws inspiration from nature and local legends. "Wewe", a mythological figure who appears frequently, is seen as a guardian of magical children in the Prisen Kiara society. In addition to being folklore, this figure represents the region's spiritual view of heavenly protection. Here, the symbol "Wewe" is used in Petan Wewe's art to remind the community of the importance of upholding morality and kindness. According to Marsim's explanation, even though Petan Wewe's face shape is maternal and paternal, the surrounding community considers mythology a medium for learning moral and ethical values.

In addition, spiritual symbols in Petan Wewe art also have religious elements. For example, the use of the veil for female Petan Wewe as a symbol in several Petan Wewe performances represents God's presence in the daily lives of the people of Serang. In Islamic tradition, the moon is often interpreted as a symbol of protection. The veil in Islamic iconography symbolizes purity, protection, honor, humility, and sanctity of God's eternal presence and guidance of the right path for the ummah (Jenuri, 2024b). Thus, Petan Wewe art places these religious elements to remind people of the importance of faith in life.

The clothing and costumes worn by the artists are another important component of Petan Wewe's artistic symbolism. Traditional themes that represent one's social standing or spiritual meaning in society are often included in this fashion design. For example, red costumes can be seen as a sign of courage and strength, while white clothes symbolize purity and a clean heart. Red and black in iconography are interpreted as deep symbolism, often representing passion and love, supernatural energy and power, and resilience. According to Mang Marsim (2024b), "The inner costume used by Petan Wewe is not just visual, but has a deep symbolic message. Body movements are also used in Petan Wewe's art as a component of a simple symbolic system. Although every simple movement in the Petan Wewe dance has a deeper meaning connected to moral or spiritual principles, the sambal also adjusts to the rhythmic sounds chanted by the big flying percussionist, drums, and trumpets, and, most importantly, to the tunes of prayer. While swift, dynamic movements can be seen as a sign of strength and protection, gentle, calm movements often represent inner peace and surrender to God's plan. Mang Janif (2024) stated that in the movement and sound of prayer, chanting is often associated with the expression of emotions and spiritual values.

The symbolic value of this performance is deepened by the circumcision

ritual, which is often accompanied by Petan Wewe art. The movement from one side of the stage to the other, which represents the journey of life, is one way circumcision serves as a transition from childhood to adulthood, symbolized in various artistic elements. "Circumcision is a symbol of a change in a person's social and spiritual status, which is represented through various symbolic elements in traditional art." (Syamsul, 2024).

Color in Petan Wewe's art also has an important role in his iconography. The colors used, such as black, white, red, and yellow, each have a symbolic meaning. Black symbolizes mystery and connection to the supernatural world, while white reflects purity and spiritual purification. "In traditional iconography, color is often used to convey a specific moral or spiritual message." (Marsim, 2024b). The combination of these colors creates a visual narrative that reinforces the spiritual messages in Petan Wewe's art.

Traditional music accompanying Petan Wewe art also serves as a medium to reinforce the iconic meaning of the performance. Instruments such as the big fly, gong, drum, and flute are often used to create a profound and sacred atmosphere. Music in the Banten tradition has a strong spiritual meaning, often used to accompany important ceremonies. In Petan Wewe's art, music serves as a bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds, connecting the audience with deeper meanings. The prayer and prayers that accompany Petan Wewe's journey are accompanied by the rhythm of big flying music, and the kendang is a self-approach to the khalik, which will be a condition for spiritual meaning. The recitation of prayer is a ta'dziman against the Prophet Muhammad (saw). In the prayer, worship serves as a deep spiritual meaning (Syamsul, 2024).

The overall iconography of Petan Wewe Prisen art reflects the integration of culture, spirituality, and local wisdom. The symbols in this art are not only aesthetic elements but also tools for conveying moral and religious messages important to the community. Traditional art iconography often reflects people's outlook on life and spiritual values (Hoelscher, 2009). Petan Wewe art, with its rich and profound symbolism, reflects the religious and social life of the Serang people. In this context, Petan Wewe's art is not only entertainment, but also an educational medium that conveys important values to the younger generation. The symbols in this art serve as a tool to remind the community of the importance of maintaining tradition and faith. Traditional art is a mirror of a society's cultural and spiritual identity (Edagawa, 2015). Through iconography, Petan Wewe's art becomes more than just a performance; it becomes a tangible manifestation of the cultural and religious heritage that continues to live among the people of Serang, Banten.

### **Iconology in the Art of Petan Wewe Prisen: An Exploration of Symbolic Meaning and Cultural Values**

As one of the artistic expressions rich in symbolic meaning, Petan Wewe Prisen art provides an interesting window for scholars to delve deeper into the

spiritual and cultural values of the civilization that created it, and uncover the layers of hidden meanings hidden behind each visual feature in artworks using iconological methods (Neagota, 2023). Each theme and composition in Petan Wewe Art contains extensive symbolism, as revealed through iconographic analysis. The ideas of cosmology and life cycles are often associated with symbols of nature, such as bukhur, and celestial bodies. Furthermore, abstract and geometric designs also carry profound connotations, referring to cosmic hierarchies, social institutions, and even spiritual experiences (Purbasari et al., 2023; Wahidiyat & Carrollina, 2023).

These symbols reflect the spiritual and cultural values of the community that supports the Petan Wewe Arts. A distinctive visual form is the embodiment of values such as respect for ancestors, harmony with nature, and belief in supernatural forces (Rahmatih et al., 2020). We can understand how art serves as a medium for transmitting and sustaining those ideals from one generation to the next through iconographic analysis. It is important to emphasize that the meaning of symbols in Petan Wewe Prisen Art is contextual and dynamic (Isnart, 2020). Depending on the social and cultural context in which the artwork is created and perceived, the meaning of the symbol can evolve over time. As a result, we must consider a number of variables when evaluating these artworks, including social history, religious beliefs, and historical cultural shifts.

The relationship between oral traditions, local knowledge, and the Wewe Prisen Petan Art is one of the study's interesting conclusions. The symbols in these artworks often refer to stories and folklore passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, the Wewe Prisen Petan Art can be considered a visual encyclopedia that stores the collective knowledge of the community (Hoelscher, 2009). In addition, this research also highlights the role of gender in Wewe Prisen Petan Art. An analysis of the representation of women and men in this artwork can provide insight into society's views on gender, social roles, and power hierarchies. In conclusion, this study shows that the iconographic approach is a very useful tool for understanding the deeper meaning of the Wewe Prisen Petan Art. By analyzing symbols and cultural contexts, we can uncover the aesthetic and intellectual richness of these works of art. Furthermore, this research makes an important contribution to a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural heritage of the communities that produce Wewe Prisen Petan Arts.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research has revealed the richness of symbolic meanings contained in the Wewe Priest Petan Art. Through an iconographic approach, we can understand how this art serves as a medium for preserving society's cultural and spiritual values. Therefore, efforts to preserve and develop Wewe Prisen Petan Art are very important for maintaining the diversity of Indonesian culture. This research has opened the door for further research on the Wewe

Pristine Petan Art. Some interesting topics for research include the relationship between Wewe Prisen Petan Art and other forms of artistic expression, the influence of globalization on this art, and the role of women in the creative process. Overall, this study shows that the Wewe Prisen Petan Art is a cultural heritage that is rich in meaning and value. Through iconographic analysis, we can appreciate the aesthetic beauty and intellectual depth contained in this work of art. A deeper understanding of Wewe Prisen Petan Art will contribute to the preservation and development of Indonesian fine arts.

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