

Aceh Rencong Making in Baet Village, Aceh Besar District as A Preserved Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

This journal is entitled "The Development of Aceh Rencong Making in Baet Village, Aceh Besar Regency as a Cultural Heritage that is Still Preserved". The purpose of this study is to describe how the development process of Rencong Aceh in the Aceh Besar area, namely in the villages of Baet Meusago and Baet Lampuot, to describe what efforts were made by the makers and stakeholders so that Rencong Aceh remains a tangible cultural heritage in this era. globalization now. This study uses a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach because the problems to be studied are dynamic and complex. The data collection techniques are observation, structured interviews, documentation and other supporting books from the library that are related and lead to the research title. The results showed that the development of the Aceh Rencong making in the two villages underwent changes starting from the materials used, manufacturing procedures and the most prominent was experiencing changes in function according to the times and field conditions in the two villages where Rencong research was carried out as sharp objects and tools. stab is no longer produced. television, there are orders from the public. This is caused by several problems that exist in the field, namely the lack of attention from local communities and outsiders, and the required capital is greater. So that the craftsmen of Rencong as a stabbing tool switch to other innovations such as in Baet Meusago village making Rencong key chains and Baet Lampout village making Rencong souvenirs. Despite the changes, Rencong remains the main theme of the village. Although the resulting product has undergone changes, Rencong is still its main identity that continues to be preserved and maintained.

Keywords: History, Rencong Aceh, Baet Village, Aceh Besar, Cultural Heritage.

1. Introduction

Aceh is an area located on the westernmost island of Sumatra. Its strategic location and directly facing the sea makes the people of Aceh always have direct exposure to migrants from within the country and abroad. Its strategic location has made this region the main gateway for trade and cultural traffic in the past. The ancestors of the Acehnese people came from various regions outside Indonesia because Aceh used to be a world trade center so that many immigrants stopped by in Aceh. The traders who stopped in Aceh did not only bring their wares but they also brought the culture from where they lived. After the trading and shipping activities that took place, the Kingdom of Aceh experienced very rapid and very broad development, then these developments also affected several fields including the social, political and cultural fields. Various cultural diversity is a legacy whose existence must be preserved, both intangible cultural heritage and tangible cultural heritage, in the form of object remains, especially in today's modern era, there are certainly very many influences of globalization from outside which can fade the original culture in a place. So that cultural heritage has a shock in defending itself.

Until now, the intangible cultural heritage in Aceh that still survives, even in the era of cultural globalization, such as regional languages, namely Acehnese, Peusijek, and Kenduri, has been hereditary on certain occasions. Apart from that, there are also tangible cultural heritages such as Weapons, Clothing, Musical Instruments. Each traditional

weapon has certain characteristics from each region of origin. Like the case, Aceh's typical Rencong Weapons have various shapes and types. However, among the people of Aceh it is more popular and people are more familiar with the 4 types of Rencong weapons. The types of Rencong Aceh weapons that are known to the people of Aceh are Rencong Meucugek, Rencong Meupucok, Rencong Pudo, and Rencong Meukuree (Waryanti, 2013).

The Rencong weapon, which is a traditional weapon of the people of Aceh, has been used since the time of the Aceh Darussalam sultanate, the founder of the Aceh Darussalam kingdom as well as the first leader named Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah. The Acehnese Rencong weapon that has existed since the time of the Aceh sultanate was always used by Sultan Ali Mughayatsyah. In ancient times, the Acehnese always slipped a sharp object, namely Rencong, into their bodies. Like the Rencong which is tucked in the front of the waist, the Acehnese ureung is very easy to read because they are very open people whether they like it or not, they will be told frankly (Essi Hermaliza, 2014: 26) including Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah also always tucks the Rencong on his waist and according to historical records also this Rencong Weapon began to be used during the time of Sultan Ali Mughayat Syah ruled the Kingdom of Aceh in 1514 – 1528 (Mahmud Tammat et al., 1996: 364). As a traditional Acehnese weapon, Rencong is used by all groups, not only by the nobility but also by ulee balang and ordinary people. Although Rencong is used by all groups, the main ingredients in making Rencong vary according to social status in society. The material for making Rencong for kings and aristocrats is the sheath made of ivory and the dagger made of gold. Meanwhile, for ordinary people, the sheath is made of buffalo horn, the wood and the dagger are usually made of eucalyptus or silver. Although the main ingredients for making Rencong are different. But it does not distinguish the original form of Rencong which, if observed from the tip of the hilt to the tip of the dagger, is in the form of Arabic writing which has a special meaning. The Rencong weapon, from its shape, contains a religious value, namely the series of BA, MIM, LAM and HA characters embody the sentence "BISMILLAH" (Tammam et al., 1996).

During the period of Dutch and Japanese imperialism, Rencong was still well prepared and stored in their respective households (Rusdi Sufi et al., 2004: 132). Therefore, Acehnese heroes also used Rencong against Portuguese, Dutch and Japanese colonialism. The Rencong weapon has a symbol of nobility and toughness so that when the heroes use Rencong as a weapon of war against the invaders, the fighters have strong confidence and toughness to gain victory and a shahit reward imbued with the term Poh Kaphe (Hermaliza, 2014). With the spirit of the teachings of sabil war, it crosses the minds of the Acehnese people who have an interpretation that if Muslims kill infidels, they will get a shahit reward in the sight of Allah SWT.

In its development, Rencong is still being used by various groups. Rencong is very popular in use as a complementary accessory to Acehnese traditional clothing which is used at weddings, circumcisions or at other cultural events. On the other hand, in the development of this typical Aceh weapon, it also has an important role in typical Acehnese souvenirs which have been arranged in the form of typical regional souvenirs.

In this scientific work, the author wants to collect some information and data based on the formulation of the problem. So, the author conducted his research in two villages, namely Baet Meusago Village and Baet Lampuot Village. Previously, places for ordering or making Rencong were at many points, namely, Kampung Pandee, Seuneulop, Lam Blang, Baet, Ulee Kareng, Lam Pakuk, Indrapuri, Seulimeum, Lhong and so on (Tammam et al., 1996). However, as time went on, the place where the process of making and developing rencong is still being carried out today is Baet Sibreh and Lam Blang (Mahmud Tammat et al 1996: 364). Rencong Aceh as one of the cultural heritages that is still being

maintained which is the identity of the people of Aceh. So, according to the field story and the explanation above, the author takes the big title as the material he wants to examine in his thesis, namely “The Development of Aceh Rencong Making in Baet Village, Aceh Besar District as a Cultural Heritage that is Still Being Maintained”. Based on the description of the background above, there are several problems that will be discussed, namely the development process of making Aceh Rencong in the Aceh Besar area, Obstacles faced in the process of making Aceh Rencong and how is the process of preserving Aceh Rencong as a cultural heritage.

2. Method

The research methodology is the steps taken by a researcher with the aim of collecting data or information to be processed and analyzed scientifically. The type of research used in this study is a qualitative research method because the research procedure produces descriptive data derived from written or spoken words from people and behavior that can be observed directly. So, the method used by the researcher to collect the data is by conducting direct interviews in the field with informants who have direct involvement and involvement with the title being researched, more focused on the subject matter. Interviews like this are also called structured interviews.

Data collection, data processing and data analysis were carried out in stages (multistage and multilevel) with purposive samples, namely where several samples could represent livelihoods from the community (Miles, & Huberman, 1992). The first thing researchers have to do before carrying out the data collection process is to first obtain permission from the local village head. As for some things that must be done by researchers in the forms of: (1) Letter of assignment, (2) Permit from the above agency, (4) Showing some research equipment such as photos, tape recorders, video recorders, and so on, (5) perhaps in certain cases the giver permission to order the researcher to explain the aims, objectives, expected research results, who should be contacted, even if it takes time to study the research design, and so on (Lexy J. Moleong, 1996: 87). After passing through these stages, the head of the village directs the research location directly to carry out the research process at the place where the rencong is made in the village. In accordance with the above method, the data collection techniques used by researchers are observation, interviews, and documentation.

The next step is data analysis. Data analysis is a method used by researchers to sort out clear and accurate data on the information they have obtained. Data analysis is an attempt by researchers to deal directly with research problems by analyzing, concluding and describing the data that has been obtained in accordance with the subject matter and the accuracy of the data found in the field. All data that has been collected either obtained by observation, interviews or documentation. Then analyzed using the theoretical framework used in this study. From the analysis of the data that has been obtained to produce an in-depth and systematic conclusion so that it is expected to be able to answer the formulation of the problem in this study.

3. Results and Discussion

The Development of Aceh Rencong Making

Rencong is the result of human culture which continues to experience development based on human work and mindset. The development of Rencong is closely related to one of the opinions of an Indonesian anthropologist, namely Koentjaraningrat, who argued that culture is the whole system, ideas, actions and results of human work in the framework of the life of society which belongs to humans by learning. Previously, the Rencong weapon

was used on every waist of the Acehnese people by both women and men. However, over time, Rencong was not only used as a self-defense weapon. But Rencong is used as an accessory for traditional clothing because this traditional object contains historical values of the Acehnese kingdom in the past.

The history of Aceh records various weapons equipment. Rencong swords and weapons are not only weapons of war but Rencong is complementary equipment and must be present in terms of the traditional dress of the Acehnese people. However, among the existing weapons, only Rencong is recognized as a symbol to represent the Aceh region (Barbara Leigh 1989: 45). Even though the Rencong weapon has problems in defending itself, this does not make the Acehnese people continue to strive so that Rencong remains an identity and cultural heritage among the Acehnese people.

Nowadays, the production of Rencong has experienced scarcity and is only made by a few people because the demand for Rencong has been decreasing and the price of the main raw material has also increased. Today's Rencong weapons are only made by people in the area who have been making these crafts for generations. According to the results of research in the village of Baet Meusago, from their ancestors until around the 90s, almost all residents of Baet Meusago and Baet Lampuot used to work as Rencong craftsmen, but not today. Now some Rencong weapon craftsmen have switched to other jobs. However, some of them still produce Rencong but in the form of new innovations, namely making Rencong in the form of key chains like in Baet Meusago village and making Rencong souvenirs like in Baet Lampuot Village.

In its development from time to time this typical Aceh weapon also has an important role as typical Acehnese souvenirs which have been arranged in the form of typical regional souvenirs. The government also helps in maintaining the existence of Rencong by including Rencong Aceh in cultural events both within the scope of Aceh and those held outside Aceh. As in the Aceh Cultural Week (PKA) activities which have been held every 5 years in Banda Aceh since 1958 during the reign of Ali Hasyimi (Serambinews. Saturday 10 April 2021). However, they took their goods directly from the souvenir shop, not from the Rencong craftsmen community.

The process of making Rencong has changed in accordance with technological developments, both those used such as Rencong craftsmen in the village of Baet Meusago and in the village of Baet Lampuot, where previously when making Rencong only used manual tools such as files, tarek saws and tire shovels, while now they are using tools machines such as Garendu and drills so that the time needed to make Rencong is more efficient than before using machine tools. Hence, the use of tools in the Rencong making process has increased, initially only using traditional tools, turning to using traditional and modern tools.

The main materials used in the process of making Rencong weapons are iron for the eyes of the Rencong and buffalo horn for the scabbard and hilt. However, it is different from the main material used for Rencong souvenirs which uses brass. According to the results of an interview with one of the craftsmen from Baet Lampuot village, Mr. Riza, the use of the main material for the Rencong stabbing weapon is different from the use of the main material for the Rencong weapon which is packaged as a souvenir because the Rencong weapon must be sharper than using brass which is more blunt.

Making Rencong is a hereditary tradition as a form of cultural preservation in the villages of Baet Meusago and Baet Lampuot, although now it has changed its function according to needs. However, on the other hand, it is also a livelihood for the people, even though at present the interest in Rencong weapons has begun to decrease because one of the problems that has been a problem from the past until now is the prohibition to carry sharp weapons at the airport so that tourists who come to the place where Rencong is made only see how the manufacturing process and they cannot buy it to take home to their

country of origin unless it has been framed first in the form of a souvenir. This is also one that will affect the economy of the Rencong-making community so that the Rencong craftsmen experience a reduction in economic income.

Obstacles in Making Rencong

The Rencong weapon is a tangible cultural heritage in Aceh and is an Acehnese cultural identity. However, the craftsmen of the Rencong weapons as stabbing tools in Aceh experienced several obstacles in the process of preserving them. One of the obstacles faced by craftsmen of Rencong weapons is that the main raw material used for making Rencong has increased so that people who previously made Rencong weapons as sharp objects and stabbing tools have switched to other types of work. However, some groups still make Rencong weapons by means of various new innovations, namely making Rencong in the form of a gun hanger made by Baet Meusago village craftsmen and making Rencong souvenirs like those made by the Baet Lampuot community group. The following are some of the obstacles faced by Rencong craftsmen in the village of Baet Meusago from several aspects, namely in terms of the main raw materials, in terms of marketing, in terms of government concern, and in terms of packaging.

Preservation of Aceh Rencong

Rencong Aceh is a cultural heritage that must be preserved. In this preservation process, in addition to increasing the results of Rencong, the community must also be involved in the process of preserving the Rencong. Rencong craftsmen's hopes for the government so that one of these tangible cultural heritages is preserved, namely: (1) the government arranges for a permit so that the Rencong weapons, which are the identity of the Acehnese people, can be brought by local people and outside Aceh to other places, such as Rencong weapons with medium size to be used as decoration without having to be packaged first in the form of souvenirs; (2). the government intervenes in fostering and facilitating the needs needed in the field, such as providing assistance with the materials used to make Rencong, both the main material being wood produced by craftsmen in Baet Meusago Village to make Acehnese Rencong jar hangers as well as buffalo horns and brass as produced by the village community of Baet Lampuot; (3) the government provides assistance in the form of empowerment fees to each Rencong craftsman at least once every three months; (4) the government assists in the marketing process and helps promote various layers of local and foreign communities, such as making Baet Meusago and Baet Lampuot villages tourist destinations with collaboration between city or district governments, village officials and tour guides; and (5) the government directly intervenes in advancing one of these cultural identities.

The preservation process that is carried out is usually from a variety of things including, namely:

1. The preservation of Aceh Rencong does not only focus on Rencong but also involves the people who make Aceh Rencong, because anyone who understands the procedures and steps for making Rencong can. However, those who are clever and able to make Rencong are only Rencong craftsmen,
2. In the process of preserving Rencong it is also important to involve Rencong craftsmen in various cultural events, cultural dialogues, seminars and training related to culture.
3. The process of preserving cultural heritage must also be balanced with the community's economy. If Rencong craftsmen just make it without any promotion, there will be no good impact on the craftsmen.

In the process of preserving Rencong not only focusing on Rencong but also focusing on the Rencong-making community by involving the community in various

cultural events, cultural dialogues, seminars and training related to culture so that with the government's attention to craftsmen it will increase community economy. So, what must be involved in the Rencong preservation process is that all groups, starting from Rencong makers, village officials, youth, local government, cultural activists, NGOs and stakeholders must work together in the preservation process.

According to field research, the preservation process carried out by the regional government and agencies related to culture towards local culture or cultural heritage, namely:

1. Publish on social media,
2. Invite people involved in the preservation process to provide encouragement about the preservation of local culture,
3. Instilling in children to learn local culture both at school and in their family environment,
4. Provide special and cultural preservation, for example in maintenance and care.

Apart from the things mentioned above, there are also other forms of cultural preservation carried out by the local community, namely:

1. Get to know art and culture and raise awareness of preserving art and culture,
2. Have a sense of pride in their own culture,
3. Introducing cultural diversity to the world,
4. Keeping the local language and not ashamed of the local language,
5. Using traditional clothes when there are traditional events, in this case also including using the Rencong weapon as a complement to the typical Acehnese clothing,
6. Often hold art activities or events and compete in the area.

4. Conclusions

Rencong has changed its function according to the needs and developments of the times. Over time, previously Rencong was only used as a personal protective equipment during war and as a complementary accessory to the Acehnese people's daily clothing. However, as time goes by, now the Rencong weapon is only used as a complementary accessory to Acehnese clothing. Nevertheless, Rencong remains a tangible cultural heritage and the identity of the people of Aceh which must be preserved at any time.

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