



Cultural Strategy of Jaranan Arts in the Midst of Modernization: Portrait of Jaranan Okta Putri Kencono in Surabaya City

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ABSTRACT

Jaranan as the traditional heritage of the people of East Java, Surabaya faces great challenges due to urbanization and globalization. The *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono group, although new, managed to survive in the midst of social changes and competition with other art groups. This study examines the cultural strategies applied by this group to adapt to modernization. This research reveals how technological and social adaptations are applied in maintaining the existence of traditional arts amid declining interest in modern entertainment. This qualitative research examines Okta Putri Kencono cultural strategy in adapting to modernization in Surabaya. The study was conducted in Lakarsantri and Wiyung, Surabaya which were chosen because of their relevance to the group's origins and appearance. We triangulated between observation, interview, and documentation as our data collection methods. Interview was conducted with various members of the Okta Putri Kencono group, consisting of consists of the founder, leader, and *bopo*; *bopo* senior; and sound system administrator. The study show that three phases faced by *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono group are mythical phase, ontological phase, and functionalist phase. In the mystical phase, *Jaranan* still maintains spiritual rituals such as offerings as a tribute to ancestors. The ontological phase is characterized by the reinterpretation of traditional values to answer the challenges of modern society, including adaptation to performance elements without leaving traditional identities. Meanwhile, the functionalist phase adapts to modernization, Okta Putri Kencono integrates modern elements, such as audiovisual technology, updated story themes, and collaborations with young artists and creative communities. In essence, the *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono group has successfully navigated the challenges of modernity while preserving its rich cultural heritage. By adapting to changing times, the group

ensures the continued vitality of the Jaranan tradition for future generations.

1. Introduction

Culture today faces great challenges in the era of modernization, technological developments and increasingly rational society make traditional arts undergo changes. Culture and society are inseparable pillars, because they have values and functions as guidelines for the code of conduct in the form of norms, customary laws, rules of manners, and habits that exist in people's lives. A rationalist society tends to divert attention from tradition to more practical things. Culture is a whole system of ideas, actions from human works in community life that are made human beings by learning (Koentjaraningrat, 2015:144). Culture is not static, but changes penetrate and affect aspects of life and become a process of circumstances that continuously adapt to new contexts, demands and needs. The results of cultural development that reflect the work and totality come from human activities, building culture means building civilization, which plays a role in affirming the identity and character of a nation (Wahyuni, 2021:3). Culture has universal elements, one of which is art. *Jaranan* is a traditional art heritage in the culture of the East Java community, this art has a long history and has become part of the socio-culture of the community. *Jaranan* as an art form of the Javanese people with a dance on horseback and played by a group of people accompanied by gamelan music. *Jaranan* is in the form of arts or dances of cultural roots that grow and develop in the environment of rural communities whose lives go hand in hand with the world of mythology (Wulandari, 2021:159).

The city of Surabaya as the capital of East Java and one of the metropolitan cities in Indonesia, has undergone a process of modernization in culture. Modernization is a gradual process, from a simple-primitive order of life to a more advanced and complex order (Alamsyah & Syarifuddin, 2022:153). The art of *Jaranan* in the city of Surabaya is not only an entertainment performance, but also a cultural expression that holds historical, social, and spiritual values. In modern *Jaranan* art, there is a development of acculturation that produces a different form, thus affecting the main elements of the performance. Urbanization, globalization, and lifestyle have an impact on the implementation of *Jaranan* art. *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono is one of the *Jaranan* arts in the city of Surabaya. In its journey, this *Jaranan* is relatively new in the city of Surabaya and still survives in the midst of competition from other *Jaranan* groups. *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono journey has experienced various ups and downs since its inception.

There are several previous studies showing that the art of *Jaranan* has undergone changes in function and meaning. Research (Ulum, 2020) of *Jaranan* art describes the commodification of cultural practices in *Jaranan* art that is ongoing to respond to changes in societal dynamics, where *Jaranan* art not only has a function in entertainment but also to strengthen cultural identity in the midst of globalization. However, there is a difference with this study, the researcher

highlights the strategy used by the Okta Putri Kencono group to develop culture and adapt in the midst of modernization. Research conducted (Aziz et al., 2019; Mutiarasari & Suwandi, 2022) the current changes in Jaranan Kepang Temanggung, where Jaranan plays a role for community entertainment in the regional tourism industry. The difference in this study is that Jaranan emphasizes that Jaranan has a role in regional tourism, not using a cultural strategy approach. *Jaranan* art integrates new elements with existing traditions, and *Jaranan* actors respond to the changes that occur. *Jaranan* has undergone a change in the shape of the property, this is to keep up with the times and the market for art enthusiasts (Mahardhika, 2021:71). To face new challenges the concept of cultural strategy become pretty important to preserve, to develop, and to promote culture in the midst of globalization. The development of *Jaranan* art can survive and develop in the midst of ongoing socio-cultural changes.

The development of *Jaranan* art can survive and develop in the midst of changes in viewing culture as a continuous "learning process". The challenge for the *Jaranan* art group Okta Putri Kencono in preserving the *Jaranan* art is to adjust the values contained in the *Jaranan* art with the needs of adapting to social, technological and economic changes in the community. People's interest in traditional entertainment began to fade due to the sophistication of technology that featured practical entertainment spectacles. The way to face these challenges requires the concept of cultural strategy to preserve, develop, and promote culture in the midst of globalization.

Seeing these challenges, an appropriate cultural strategy is needed to maintain existence in the midst of the development of modern society. This research focuses on the cultural strategies used by the *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono art group in the city of Surabaya in facing the challenges of social change and technological development. Through Cornelis Anthonie van Peursen's theory of cultural strategy, this research also aims to explore how the association adjusts to the modernization of *Jaranan* art changes in the city of Surabaya, especially in technology and social changes in the community. The theory of cultural strategy put forward by van Peursen providing a critical view of the process of socio-cultural change.

2. Method

This study used qualitative approach to explore a deeper understanding of the cultural strategy applied by the Okta Putri Kencono group in the midst of the modernization of the city of Surabaya. The research was carried out in Jeruk Gang 1 Village, Lakarsantri District and Wiyung Village, Surabaya City. This location was chosen as a research site because it is the home of the founder of the art Okta Putri Kencono and the second location is the place where the Jaranan Okta Putri Kencono is performed. The city of Surabaya was chosen because as a metropolitan city, Surabaya has rapid modernization dynamics, so it is a suitable place to study how the traditional art of Jaranan survives and adapts in the midst of social changes that occur. The study was conducted between September 2023 and August 2024.

We triangulate between observation, interviews, and documentation as our data collection methods (Sugiyono, 2022:242). In this study, observations were

conducted for understanding the social and cultural context in the Jaranan Okta Putri Kencono art group, observing various aspects of Jaranan performance, and how traditional arts were promoted according to the interests of modern society, how Jaranan players perform, the role of technology in performances. The topics of interview include their views and experiences on the various cultural strategies implemented by the group, as well as the challenges they faced in maintaining traditional arts in the modern era. Documentation refers to the recording, archiving, and other archives of all stages and elements involved in the art of Jaranan Okta Putri Kencono. According to Berenson (Berenson, 2018:67), documentation provided archival evidence in the form of photos, videos, and recordings, supporting the authenticity of the findings.

The analysis follows the Miles and Huberman (1984) model, which involves reduction, presentation, and conclusion of data. During data reduction, information collected through observation, interviews, and documentation is filtered, simplified, and organized to focus on key themes and patterns relevant to the group's cultural strategy. Redundant or irrelevant data is excluded, ensuring the analysis remains directed towards understanding the phenomenon being studied. In the data presentation stage, the reduced data is compiled into a coherent narrative, integrating insights from all data sources to comprehensively describe the key findings in each category. This step provides a holistic view of the group's cultural strategy and its contextual significance. Finally, in the drawn or verified conclusion phase, the conclusion is synthesized based on the analyzed findings and continuously reviewed to ensure its validity and consistency with the data. The main findings highlight specific cultural strategies categorized into key themes the preservation of traditions, efforts to preserve Jaranan art, promoting cultural heritage, and the adaptation of Jaranan in the midst of Modernity. Each category was examined on the basis of its significance, implementation, and impact, providing a nuanced understanding of how these elements interact within the cultural framework of the Jaranan art group.

While participation is voluntary, and informants can withdraw at any time without any consequences. Interview was conducted by consent, so did the recording of the interview process. All names are real name with the consent of reserach participants.

3. Result and Discussion

- **The Journey of Jaranan Okta Putri Kencono**

Okta Putri Kecono Art is one of the *Jaranan* arts located in Lakarsantri, Surabaya City. The *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono Arts was formed in 2019 by Mr. Achmadi with the aim of answering the urgent need for adequate training facilities for the *Jaranan* art group in the area. This initiative arose from Mr. Achmadi's social concern for the preservation of traditional arts, especially *Jaranan* which at that time was experiencing obstacles due to the lack of traditional musical instruments. Mr. Achmadi played a central role in the formation and development of this studio. With his own funds, he bought the necessary traditional musical instruments, such as *gamelan* and *kendang*, which became the main means of practicing and performing *Jaranan*. The Okta Putri Kencono

Studio received a very positive response from the community and art actors. Players who previously did not have adequate training grounds began to register and join this studio.

The artistic journey of *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono has experienced various dynamics in its internal and external development. In this phase, it is seen that there are ups and downs in the performance related to social, economic, and community factors. In the 2019 period of the year of formation, *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono, the founder and administrator, sacrificed materials to ensure that this *Jaranan* continued to run. On the initial trip, *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono did not get many offers to perform. The lack of invitations to performances makes the incoming income not proportional to the expenses. Despite facing challenges, social motivation and preserving culture are the main pillars of maintaining Okta Putri Kencono's teachings. The administrators and players believe that preserving art is a moral responsibility that must be carried out.

In the 2020-2021 season, the world experienced Covid-19, which had an impact on the performing arts industry. The government's policy that restricts public activities, especially in crowds, has an impact on Okta Putri Kencono's art events to stop performing altogether. The 2022 period began to experience a post-pandemic recovery after a 2-year vacuum, becoming the revival of Okta Putri Kencono. Starting to improve the health situation and stretching the rules, the arts began to experience a drastic increase in the performance lineup. Okta Putri Kencono receives invitations to perform 4 to 5 times a week. This surge in demand indicates that the public is enthusiastic about entertainment after the pandemic. In 2023-2024, Okta Putri Kencono experience a decrease in the frequency of performances. On average, in a week, they only get two performance invitations. The main factor affecting this decline is the weakening global economic condition. Many communities and organizations have adjusted their budgets, including a reduction in the allocation of funds for entertainment and cultural activities. This has an impact on the reduced frequency of Okta Putri Kencono performance invitations. Overall, the development of *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono from 2019 to 2024 shows a typical dynamic. Starting from the initial enthusiasm, reducing due to the pandemic, experiencing a revival, to having to adjust to the challenges that affect the number of performances. However, this group has survived and continues to be part of the efforts to preserve traditional culture in the midst of modernization.

- **Phases of Cultural Development**

Strategy refers to a systematically arranged series of actions aimed at achieving specific results and goals, while addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities within society (Choirunnisa & Karmilah, 2021:95). In the context of culture, cultural strategy underscores the importance of perceiving culture not merely as a legacy of the past, but as a dynamic tool to navigate the future (Suyanto, 2007:16). In the era of modernization, cultural strategies involve balancing the preservation of traditional values with the incorporation of innovative elements that align with contemporary needs. Culture includes all aspects of human actions, such as how they understand death and carry out ceremonies in response to these events related to birth, sexuality, managing food,

manners, art, science, and religion are included in the scope of culture (Van Peursen, 1988:16). Van Peursen who contributed to the study of culture in his theory of cultural strategy classifies three phases of cultural development, namely the mystical phase, the ontological stage, and the functionalist stage, which will be discussed below.

Mystical Phase: Maintaining Traditional Roots

The mystical stage is when humans feel trapped by the supernatural forces around them. In the mystical world, individuals do not have a clear identity of their own. Man in the mystical world, surrounded by "primitive" culture, which means that man is in direct contact with the old forces that are all secret (Van Peursen, 1988:34). In the context of *Jaranan* art, the early identification of the development of the mystical stage, in which spiritual values and rituals predominate. In ancient times, *Jaranan* became a sacred spectacle that was carried out at certain times and in certain places with the ritual of summoning the spirits of their ancestors they believed, although now the ancestors are still doing it but with a different touch. In ancient times, *Jaranan* dance performances were staged when people received disturbances from evil spirits that plagued the community. In addition to the *Jaranan* art, ritual carried out when there was an outbreak of disease or natural disaster, they believed that all obstacles in living life came from evil spirits that they believed in (Wahyuni, 2021:4). The ritual system in the *Jaranan* performance is a form that the Javanese people believe, respect, and maintain tradition by believing that we live in this world side by side with the supernatural or the nature that we cannot see (Waryan Sejati & Sukarman, 2021:6).

Mystical values displayed as spiritual efforts that are carried out beyond human boundaries through several supporting aspects. The relationship of mystical values with the performance of *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono can be seen during the performance. This is one of the strategies in *Jaranan* performances and is associated with the ritual system in *Jaranan* art. The Javanese people believe and respect the tradition where living in the world coexists with the invisible supernatural. The ritual that exists at this time is only a magical value that is able to attract the attention of the audience. Before the performance takes place, there are several stages of rituals that are carried out before the performance of Okta Putri Kencono's. The *Jaranan* performance began with the process of *suguh sesaji*¹ in the context of Okta Putri Kencono, *suguh sesaji* prayer is carried out as a tribute to the spirits of ancestors, *danyang* (spirit), and spiritual ethnicities at the performance location (see Figure 1 below). The giving of offerings is usually inseparable from the belief in supernatural beings (spirit beings) or invisible astral beings (Rofiq & Prahara, 2020:352).

¹ *Suguh sesaji* is a form of respect, thanksgiving, and hope for smooth running and blessings from God Almighty. In this tradition, offerings or offerings are prepared with full sincerity by the community as an expression of gratitude and a request so that the event runs smoothly, safely and brings blessings to all involved.

Figure 1. Ritual *suguh sesaji*

Source: Fieldwork documentation, 2023

The art of *Jaranan* in the context of offerings is an important part of the process involving spiritual values and ancestor respect, as conveyed by Bopo Achmadi (the founder) that “*sesaji* are indeed a custom that has existed since our ancestors, before the staging is like we are guests in a new environment, there must be someone to guard, every village must have a *danyang* to ask for permission to carry out the performance.” *Sesaji/sesajen* (offering) contains a combination of rice, banan, coconut, small objects (needles, make up equipments, charcoal, incense), flowers (telon and setaman) which are arranged according to religious conceptions, each has its own symbolic meaning. *Sesajen* is aimed to open up space for communication with the supernatural world and purifies the location of the *Jaranan* performance.

In *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono, there is a *bopo* (handler) who leads and controls from the beginning to the end of the *Jaranan* performance. Not everybody can be a *bopo*, a person who has mystical power and plays a role in the puppeteer of the show. Before the ritual event begins, *sesajen* are prepared by group members, led by *bopo*, and accompanied by props used during the performance, such as *Jaran Kepang* which is in the form of a horse made of woven bamboo and tells the story of a soldier on horseback, *Barongan* figures in the form of lions in mythology that depict strength and protection, *Celeng* represents the wild boar which depicts resistance, *Bujang Ganong* a young figure who has a lively and energetic soul symbolizing the spirit of ingenuity, *Cambuk* or *Pecut* becomes an important element in the performance with a loud sound when is played to add to the impression in the performance and as a symbol of expelling negative energy in the *jaranan* ritual.

Burning *menyan* is carried out before the performance of this tradition begins, this aims to bring in spirits (*danyang*) to be present in this tradition, and it is permissible to participate in the procession of the performance, but it must not interfere with the course of the performance. The burning of *menyan* aims to ask permission from the ancestors so that the performance runs smoothly without any obstacles. *Jaranan* tradition respect for spiritual values and local beliefs as important part of the performance as explained by Bopo Tokoh (*bopo* senior) as follow:

Before we perform in the venue area, there must be a guard, I ask permission from the *danyang* who guard the performance venue. It's like we are guests, now I have to give permission to the ancestors of the region to display *Jaranan*, I have to respect them, so that the event can run smoothly without interruption. Usually, I will do a small mediation in the *punden*² or at the staging location before the event starts.

Bopo then bring *menyan* while reciting mantras (prayers) around the braided horse performance equipment, *barongan*, which has the purpose of asking for permission from the *danyang* who is inside the performance equipment. The incense burner was carried around the performance area in order so that *danyang* and mystical entities did not interfere with the course of the event. The fragrance and the smoke that are produced mark that the mystical thing of the show begins. The performers and the audience are reminded of the influence of invisible supernatural forces into the spiritual dimension, stated by *Bopo Achmadi* (founder) that "we do give *sesajen* and guards the event venue and when we enjoy the performance, not only the community but the ancestors and supernatural things also like to watch the performance.

Before performing the performance *Jaranan* art group *Okta Putri Kencono* arranged the preparation which is designed to create a thick mystical impression, in accordance with the traditions and spiritual values contained in the art of *Jaranan*. This process involves not only physical and technical preparation, but also the spiritual and symbolic dimensions that are important parts of the *Jaranan* performance. The use of offerings in *Jaranan* performances symbolizes the relationship with ancestors in carrying out rituals. The atmosphere of the performance in the venue indicates the sacredness. The sacred feeling is aimed to conductively the players and spectators to focus on feeling the message conveyed through the art of *Jaranan*.

Ontological Phase: Rationality and New Understanding

The ontological stage is the attitude of human beings who are no longer under the siege of mystical power but freely want to examine all things. This art began to be seen as a form of entertainment or performing arts that had aesthetic value, human curiosity that was not limited only by mythological stories from the forces of nature. The development of the phase of mystical natural thought to the realm of ontological thought, also called the transition from "myth" to "logos" (Van Peursen, 1988:55). Practical deeds, such as carpentry engineering and the arts played their part, but theoretical contemplations about the visible (physics) and the invisible (metaphysics) began to come to the fore (Ahmad Qomarudin et al., 2022:554).

Ontology seeks to present a transcendent world where the world surpasses humans and makes it understandable. In 2020-2021, the *Okta Putri Kencono JarananArts* experienced a significant transition period due to the covid-19

² *Punden* is a holy place that is considered sacred and respected by the village community and usually contains the graves of ancestors or people who are considered the forerunners of the village community.

pandemic. Government regulations banning public activities have caused all forms of cultural performances to be banned, including *Jaranan*. This ban caused a deep reflection among art practitioners regarding the sustainability of traditional art in the midst of modernization and global crisis. They began to formulate how *Jaranan*, which originated in mystical beliefs and rituals, could remain relevant in modern societies. Tradition is not something static, but it can be combined with ever-changing human activities. Even during the pandemic, the players continued to practice regularly and create new things to show when things get better.

Today's *Jaranan* is integrated with more rational and modern social conditions, without losing its traditional essence and values. The adjustment process is not to eliminate elements of ancestral traditions, but to adjust the meaning to a more rational and modern socio-cultural context. The supporting elements that accompany the *Jaranan* performance should not be underestimated. The community or the audience actually sees the other side of a *Jaranan* art performance through supporting elements that are unique, distinctive, and different from others (Mahardhika, 2021:98). *Jaranan* music, which creates a mystical atmosphere in the performance, still retains traditional elements (meaningful traditional heritage), but is modified to adjust to be relevant to the modern context and to be more appealing to audiences who are less familiar with this traditional art. However, they are no longer considered sacred. Not only the *Jaranan* performance, but also *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono include a *bantengan* performance in Javanese culture associated with the symbol of strong, resilient, and unyielding animal. *Bantengan* became an attraction for the audience because the performance practiced the movements of angry bull animals, with fighting between bulls, shouting, and chasing the audience (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2. *Bantengan*



Source: fieldwork documentation, 2024

Major properties such as the *kuda lumping* and *pecut* are still considered powerful mystical symbols, but the meaning of the symbols is understood more deeply in order to seek relevance to society. The *kuda lumping*, which is believed to be a medium of ancestral spirits or supernatural powers, still plays a major role, but this show is not solely to express mystical beliefs. Instead, the property is used as a means to strengthen the relationship between humans, nature, and symbolic

forces in life. This reflects the transition from a mythical view to a more rational and contextual understanding. Each movement in the *Jaranan* dance has a deep symbolic meaning. In this phase, these values are no longer solely seen as mystical or religious expressions, but also it is also as an aesthetics performance.

The actors of Okta Putri Kencono perform the ancient *Jaranan* dance which has many meanings and which are only partially taken, but most of the movements are modified according to the times, as stated by Bopo Achmadi (the founder) that: "the art of *Jaranan* is actually used by the ancients as a propagator of religion, in the past every beat of a dance had a particular meaning, but now the players still use it, but only as a small part, others make movements according to the times." The lumping horse dance symbolizes courage, strength, or connection with nature integrated into a more universal narrative of the show. Van Peursen (1988) stated that tradition must be adapted to the socio-cultural context of today. This can be seen in the strategy of *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono which does not change the symbolic meaning of the *Jaranan* movement, but it is modified in a more inclusive modern context that is opened to wider interpretation. It was found that *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono had reinterpreted several rituals and symbols in *Jaranan*, to be more relevant to modern audiences.

The art of *Jaranan art* in the midst of modernization today is not only an art performance, but it is also modified by adding the belief that *Jaranan* players can do trance (*ndadi*).³ The *Jaranan* tradition has *ndadi* that are reflected in the combination of art and spirituality. *Ndadi* in *Jaranan* performances is considered a manifestation of mystical power, but in reality it occurs because it has its own way of playing *Jaranan* unconsciously. This can be explained in several psychological and cultural theories, so that the audience can better understand and appreciate its symbolic value without having to be bound by mystical beliefs. The *ndadi* scene became the main point in the *Jaranan* performance because it is a manifestation of spiritual power and cultural symbolism. This strategy is still carried out to increase the enthusiasm of the audience, especially to regional audiences who still believe in myths and mystical things.

Functionalist Phase: Adaptation and Innovation

In the functional phase, culture begins to be seen as a tool that functions for practical purposes in daily life. Awareness began to develop that traditions and component aspects survived through many histories, not only in the level of daily customs, folklore, and symbols of the general public, but also in the structural and institutional aspects of the central community. The functionalist strategy of modern human attitudes is increasingly visible, where *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono has made various adaptations and innovations to ensure that the art of *Jaranan* remains relevant and attractive to modern society. The efforts of *Jaranan* arts actors in the modernization era are determined in terms of the potential of Human Resources, following the development and needs of the entertainment industry, and following the development of the times. The many offers for the

³ Trance (*ndadi*) is a condition in which players are unconscious by being possessed by ancestral spirits.

performances are one of the efforts to preserve, opportunities and challenges for all *Jaranan* actors.

After the Covid-19 pandemic ended in 2022, *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono has recovered, by getting quite high demand, reaching 4-5 times a week. At this stage, *Jaranan* can also be seen as a tourism promotion instrument and as a local cultural identity that needs to be preserved. The development of tourists' interest in cultural products encourages the founder to carry out preservation and development efforts and not only for the sake of improving the culture itself, but also directed for economic interests (Ulum, 2020:87). *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono registered for an Arts Identification Number at the Cultural Office, as registration is an important step in an effort to obtain official recognition and government support, the existence of an Arts Identification number makes it easier to access arts equipment assistance, cultural programs, performance licensing, opportunities to appear in tourism events, cultural festivals, and other activities.

One of the main strategies they implemented was to integrate modern elements, such as the use of audiovisual technology in performances and the adjustment of story themes to suit the community. Okta Putri Kencono Arts collaborated with several owners of soundsystems and stages for performances. The use of traditional art performance soundsystem such as *Jaranan* has a very important role to support the successful delivery of artistic, mystical, and emotional elements to the audience. In relation to this, Mas Udin, a soundsystem administrator stated that:

Technologies such as soundsystems help amplify the sound, so that it can reach audiences on a larger scale, especially when the show is held in an open area or in a large event in addition to having to blend traditional music with modern technology.

Social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, and WhatsApp helps in increasing a wider audience, especially in the generation that often uses digital platforms. Music and props are combined with a modern sound system to attract the audience. There is an adjustment to the story theme adjusted to the development of the times. There are four scenes of the *first* twin war braids with *bopo*, the *second* war *kepang* with *celeng*, the third *kewan alas*, and the fourth *barong*. The four parts have different meanings and philosophies. However, as the times progressed, the movements and properties were created interspersed with comedy entertainment to attract more people.

Promotion on social media is very important for Okta Putri Kencono's development. Performance information can be seen through several social media accounts. Several content creators play a role in raising this promotion, with the content creators helping in the dissemination of information, such as through live broadcasts when Okta Putri Kencono is performing, uploading videos and other documentation.

In addition, collaboration with young artists and other creative communities is part of the group's functional strategy. For the acculturation of *Jaranan* Okta, Putri Kencono asked for permission first to the area of origin of the art. The development of *Jaranan* follows the *Jaranan* of the Kediri and Nganjuk areas because the *Jaranan* Okta players are taken from there, as well as taking artists from there, so later the players will teach children from Surabaya. The players are also from outside Surabaya and. Others also offer costumes and other properties to *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono for the performance. This shows that Okta Putri Kencono collaborate with people from outside Surabaya and opens up space for new and innovative ideas that can be integrated into the performance art, without sacrificing the existing traditional values. Thus, *Jaranan* art is not only seen as a cultural heritage that must be preserved, but also as a means to express cultural identity in a modern context.

4. Conclusion

The *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono art group in the city of Surabaya has succeeded in implementing a cultural strategy. *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono in Lakarsantri, Surabaya, between 2019 and 2024 reflects the dynamics of cultural adaptation in the face of modernization. Based on C. A. van Peursen's theory of cultural strategy, this art group went through three phases: mystical, ontological, and functionalist.

In the mystical phase *Jaranan* still maintains spiritual rituals such as offerings as a tribute to ancestors. Before performing, *Jaranan* art group Okta Putri Kencono meticulously prepares both technical and spiritual aspects to maintain the mystical essence of *Jaranan* traditions. Offerings are used as symbolic connections with ancestors, creating an atmosphere of sacredness that helps both performers and audiences focus on the spiritual messages conveyed.

The ontological phase, characterized by the reinterpretation of traditional values to answer the challenges of modern society, including adaptation to performance elements without leaving traditional identities. The group incorporates traditional elements like trance (*ndadi*), in which performers in a state of unconscious and it is believed to be caused by ancestral spirits. However, this phenomenon has been reinterpreted to align with modern audiences, focusing on its psychological and cultural symbolism rather than strictly mystical beliefs. The *ndadi* scene remains a highlight, emphasizing spiritual power and cultural significance, appealing particularly to audiences who value mystical traditions.

Meanwhile, the functionalist phase adapts to modernization, Okta Putri Kencono integrates modern elements, such as audiovisual technology, updated story themes, and collaborations with young artists and creative communities. They also work with soundsystem providers and stage designers to enhance performances. This approach not only preserves authenticity but also ensures skill transfer to younger generations in Surabaya. Such collaborations allow Okta Putri Kencono to diversify its performances, incorporating new costumes and props while maintaining its cultural roots.

In essence, the *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono group has successfully navigated the challenges of modernity while preserving its rich cultural heritage. By adapting

to changing times, the group ensures the continued vitality of the *Jaranan* tradition for future generations.

It is recommended that the *Jaranan* Okta Putri Kencono art group continue to develop adaptation strategies by utilizing modern technology, such as social media and digital platforms, to introduce *Jaranan* art to the younger generation and a wider audience. In addition, it is important to increase the involvement of local communities, especially in arts education and training, in order to strengthen the continuity of this tradition. Collaboration with academics, governments, and cultural institutions is also needed to support the preservation and development of *Jaranan* art in the face of modernization, while maintaining the spiritual and cultural dimension is at the core of *Jaranan* performances.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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