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NEGOTIATING TRADITION AND MODERNITY: THE DIALECTICS OF CONSERVATISM AND PROGRESSIVISM IN TEMBANG SUNDA CIANJURAN

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ABSTRAK

Inovasi dalam seni tradisional sering kali memicu polemik antara nilai konservatif dan progresif. Studi ini menawarkan model dialektika inovasi-responsif dalam seni tradisional, menggunakan Tembang Sunda Cianjuran sebagai studi kasus untuk mengintegrasikan teori konflik fungsional Lewis A. Coser. Penelitian menemukan bahwa (1) Inovasi "Nyar Luang Tina Cianjuran" berhasil mengangkat isu sosial kontemporer tanpa menghilangkan kaidah estetik inti seperti dongkari, laras, wanda, dan rumpaka. (2) Adaptasi modernisasi tematik dan integrasi multimedia meningkatkan daya tarik bagi generasi muda. (3) Konflik antara konservatisme dan progresivisme, jika dikelola dengan baik, dapat menciptakan harmoni dalam seni tradisional. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa inovasi yang bertanggung jawab dapat memperkaya relevansi budaya tanpa mengorbankan nilai tradisional.

Kata kunci: *Inovasi Budaya, Konflik Fungsional, Konservatisme, Progresivisme, Seni Tradisional, Tembang Sunda Cianjuran.*

ABSTRACT

Innovation in traditional arts often triggers polemics between conservative and progressive values. This study offers a dialectical model of innovation-response in traditional arts by using *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* as a case study to integrate Lewis A. Coser's functional conflict theory. Employing a qualitative methodology that combines case study and autoethnography, data were gathered through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentary analysis. This multi-method approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of both the artistic negotiation process and the underlying community dynamics. The research found that (1) the innovation of "Nyar Luang Tina Cianjuran" successfully addressed contemporary social issues without eliminating core aesthetic rules such as *dongkari*, *laras* (tuning), *wanda* (style), song, and lyrics; (2) thematic modernisation and multimedia integration significantly enhance the appeal to the younger generation; and (3) the conflict between conservatism and progressivism, when managed effectively, can foster internal cohesion and create

harmony within traditional arts. This research concludes that responsible innovation can enrich cultural relevance without compromising traditional values.

Keywords: Conservatism, Cultural Innovation, Functional Conflict Coser, Progressivism, *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*.

INTRODUCTION

Performing arts in Indonesia, such as *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, are often faced with the dilemma between preserving tradition and embracing innovation. Several studies have shown that keeping old forms and practices alive is important for keeping society and culture stable (Geertz, 1973; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012; Turner et al., 2011). Traditional arts are seen as an important part of keeping cultures alive. However, evolving social and cultural changes require traditional arts, including *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, to innovate in order to remain relevant.

The dialectic between conservatism and progressivism has become a central issue in the study of traditional arts, especially in the context of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, which has long been pride of Sundanese culture. According to the conservative view, traditional art functions as a pillar of cultural identity to counter the homogenising influence of globalisation, which has the potential to erase local cultural diversity (Ilsaiba, 2024). On the other hand, progressive perspectives emphasise the importance of innovation in adapting art to current social realities (Agarwal et al., 2022).

In relation to creative endeavours in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, many still hold the view that creating any form of creativity is unlikely to be better than the

original (Budiman, 2014). This view is one of the main challenges in creating space for innovation. Without adapting to social and cultural changes, *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* risks losing its relevance, especially among younger generations who are more exposed to global culture.

Departing from these problems, the performance "Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran" provides a new alternative presentation of *Gending Karesmen* in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*. This performance presents *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* in a format that is more relevant to today's social context. One of the innovations is to present the theme of social phenomena, choir, and the adaptation of multimedia-based technology into *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* performances. This approach is quite bold, considering that *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* has strong principles and established traditions in the way it is presented. By offering a new perspective, *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* becomes a progressive step to bridge tradition with the needs of contemporary artistic expression, without ignoring the aesthetic essence of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* itself. This is in line with the mandate of the Law on the Promotion of Culture Number 5 of 2017 which emphasises the importance of a balance between conservation and innovation as a strategy for cultural preservation (Salsabilla, 2024). This research seeks to answer

these challenges by exploring how *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* can adapt without losing its essence.

Theoretically, this study adopts Lewis A. Coser's conflict functionalism theoretical framework. This theory explains that social conflict is not only destructive, but can also serve to clarify social boundaries, strengthen solidarity within groups, and encourage change (Coser, 1956). In the context of performing arts, the conflict between the preservation of tradition and the drive to innovate can create significant tension. In the context of *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* performances, this conflict becomes an important mechanism that creates a dialectic between the preservation of tradition and the introduction of new elements. Thus, this study aims to analyse how *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* can transform through innovation, while still maintaining its fundamental values, thus creating a constructive dialogue between conservative and progressive values in the context of ever-evolving performing arts.

Some of the studies that underpin this research include the work of (Abdulah et al., 2013) which discusses the development of *Gending Karesmen: Ménak* Traditional Theatre in Priangan (1904-1942). This research describes the relationship between entertainment arts and the social, political and cultural context of the Dutch colonial period in Priangan. Meanwhile, (Y. Wiradiredja, 2014) examines the historical aspects of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, including noting the polemical events that occurred

in the development of the art.

The study (Ulya & Wardani, 2019), provides a comprehensive view of how the art of Ketoprak navigates the tension between tradition and modernisation. This makes it a valuable resource for examining performing arts through conservative and progressive lenses, offering insights into how traditional arts can adapt and thrive in a modern context. Meanwhile, the study conducted by (Elshafei, 2023), analyses traditional performing arts through conservative and progressive lenses, highlighting how these perspectives shape the theatrical experience.

In the context of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, (Zanten, 1992) provides important anthropological insights, while (Williams, 1990) examines the life of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* in an urban society, revealing how it has adapted to the urban environment. (Hermawan, 2016) analyses gender aspects in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, highlighting the gender roles and representations that appear in the performance. (Rosliani, 2013) examined the ornamental formula in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, providing an understanding of the aesthetic elements that make up this work. (Budiman, 2017) examined the competence of superior *panembang*, emphasising the importance of the balance between skills and knowledge in achieving the vocal quality that characterises the performance.

Although *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* has been the subject of discussion in various literatures, previous studies

have not explored the dialectic between conservative and progressive perspectives in traditional arts. This study fills the gap by analysing the dialectic through the lens of Coser's (1956) functional conflict theory, which sees conflict as a constructive mechanism to clarify social boundaries, strengthen internal solidarity and encourage change (Lewis, 1956). Using the *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* performance as a case study, this research offers an innovation-responsive model that can serve as a reference for other traditional arts in Indonesia and the world.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyse *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* as a performing arts phenomenon in the dialectic between conservative and progressive values. This approach allows in-depth exploration of the interaction of traditional and innovative elements in the performing arts, as outlined by Creswell that case studies allow researchers to comprehensively investigate limited systems in real contexts (Creswell, 2014). An autoethnographic approach was used to integrate personal experience with cultural analysis, revealing conservative resistance to innovation in *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* (MacKay, 2024). This approach provides deep insights into creative processes and cultural dynamics, and shows how creator reflection creates a productive dialogue between tradition and innovation.

Data collection was conducted through three main methods. Firstly, document review involved analysing

articles, books, theses, dissertations and reports by the initiator to understand the historical and artistic context of *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran*. Secondly, interviews were conducted in stages from June 2013 to January 2025, involving key stakeholders in the ecosystem of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, including performance consultants, artists, cultural experts, and art appreciators. The primary informants comprised Yus Wiradiredja (Cianjuran maestro and academic), Ubun Kubarsah (composer and Sundanese music creator), Dian Hendrayana (poet and Sundanese language scholar), Asep Solihin (karawitan lecturer), Neneng Dinar and Hery Suheryanto (prominent panembang of Cianjuran). These interviews provided a comprehensive perspective on artistic innovation, aesthetic dynamics, and community responses to the modernisation of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*. These interviews aimed to confirm the audience's response to the performance, both during and after the performance. Third, audiovisual observation and analysis included direct observation of the creative process, video documentation, and analysis of the performance structure, to understand how conservative and progressive elements interact in this work.

The data processing stage included classification, reduction and verification to filter out relevant and accurate information. In addition, triangulation techniques were also used by comparing results from various sources to ensure data validity. Meanwhile, the data analysis

process was conducted thematically with the aim of identifying the main patterns that emerged, such as the dialogue between conservatism and progressivism and its impact on the preservation and development of traditional performing arts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This analysis not only enriches the understanding of the dynamics in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, but also provides strategic insights for other traditional arts amidst the challenges of the times.

DISCUSSION

An Overview of *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran*'s Performance

The year 2014 became an important milestone in the transformation of vocal presentation in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* at the Department of Karawitan, the Indonesian Cultural Art Institute (ISBI) Bandung, with the introduction of the thematic concept as a student's final project. This approach gives students the freedom to explore and interpret their creative ideas for innovative performance concepts. In this context, Arif Budiman and his colleagues presented a presentation of the Sundanese song *Cianjuran* titled *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* as a final project that raised social themes and was relevant to the younger generation. The performance not only introduced innovations in the story but also created a space for the audience to understand moral messages through simpler lyrics and contextualized stories (Budiman, 2014).

In general, *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* performances commonly presented in the Final Project at the Department

of *Karawitan*, ISBI Bandung, follow a conventional format. The presentation includes various *wanda* (song style), such as *papantunan*, *jejemplangan*, *dedegungan*, *rarancagan*, *kakawèn*, and *panambih*, which are performed by *panembang* or *juru mamaos* (singer) in a coherent manner. The position of the singers generally follows tradition, with the men sitting cross-legged, while the women sit in the *èmok* position, in front of the accompanying musicians (*pamirig*). This format has become a firm fixture and rarely underwent significant change until the 2000s. Another case is the *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* performance, which is performed with the concept of *Gending Karesmen*. The concept of *Gending Karesmen* is multidimensional performance art that involves various elements of art, such as movement, dance, expression, and developed dialogue (M. Y. Wiradiredja, 2000). Despite the innovative nature of the lyrics and narrative, the composition remains consistent with the conventional structure of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, adhering to the established aesthetic principles of the genre.



Figure 1 Presentation of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* in Conventional Style
Documentation: Ria Mustika Dewi, 2012

This performance was inspired by Ganjar Kurnia's "Nyu'uh," which tells the story of a young man who is dragged down by the flow of city life without norms, leading to regret. Unlike "Nyu'uh," which features various types of performing arts in the concept of "badingkut" (diversity), *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* performance presented by Arif Budiman and his colleagues remains exclusively within the realm of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* songs. Although inspired by "Nyu'uh," it features a different form of presentation and character, creating a unique interpretation.

This novel approach constitutes a substantial departure for the *Gending*

Karesmen Tembang Sunda Cianjuran, which conventionally concentrates on pantun stories or royal histories, such as the Lutung Kasarung and Sangkuriang tales. By addressing contemporary social issues, *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* exemplifies the challenges confronting the younger generation in preserving traditional values, whilst also reflecting the evolving intricacies of modernity

The social themes in *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* also reflect artistic innovation as a reflection of the reality of contemporary society. Moral decline and the influence of popular culture are important themes in this performance that are relevant to today's audiences.

Table 1 Scene Structure of "Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran"

Scene	Structure & Music (Core Elements in Cianjuran)	Theme & Content
Opening	Wanda Kakawèn: Sebrakan Sapuratina (<i>salendro</i> tune), contains a proverb that emphasises prudence in living life. Wanda Papantunan & Jeemplangan: Nataän Gunung & Jemplang Karang. - Musical illustration (emphasising the atmosphere of sadness).	Raising the proverb about prudence in life and depicting the symbol of asking for safety through the dance of Nyi Pohaci and Gugunungan. The narration of the verse Al-Isra' (23) emphasises filial piety, followed by an initial dialogue about the blessing to pursue knowledge.
Conflict	Wanda Dedegungan: <i>Durma Degung</i> (<i>pèlog/degung</i> tuning). - Musical and vocal illustrations depicting the glamour and hedonism of city life.	Highlighting the influence of glamorous city life and free lifestyles that change children's behaviour. The critical dialogue from the ustad that invites children to return to the right path reinforces the shift in values, creating tension between tradition and modernity.
Crisis	Wanda Rarancagan: Songs: <i>Cinta Waas</i> and <i>Patelak Rasa</i> (<i>laras wisaya</i>)	Describes the anxiety of parents in the village due to the condition of their children in the city. Through prayers and pleas for salvation, there is a deep sense of anxiety regarding the negative influence of promiscuity and the impact of modernity on traditional values.
Reconciliation	Songs: <i>Kulu-kulu Barat</i> , <i>Ceurik Rahwana</i> , and <i>Sekar Gambir</i> (<i>laras sorog</i>). Wanda Panambih: <i>Sekar Duaan</i>	Featuring the child's return with a shabby appearance and a statement of regret, followed by an emotional dialogue between parents who are initially angry but eventually forgive each other. The child promises to return to the right path, signalling reconciliation and restoration of family relationships.

Audiences play a big role in shaping new ideas that can get them more involved with the arts (Xu, 2022). By addressing these issues, the performance not only serves as an effective social critique but also extends the relevance of traditional art to a globalised society.

Conflict as a Social Boundary Mechanism

In traditional arts such as *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, conflicts arise in response to innovations that challenge long established norms. This study employs Lewis A. Coser's functional conflict theory to demonstrate that such tensions act as a safety valve, channeling social pressure in a controlled manner. For instance, conservatives have strongly opposed Ubun Kubarsah's new approach in Sekar Anyar, which use ornamentation that they see as "nyelenèh," or atypical and changed *pirigan* patterns (Dzikriawan et al., 2021). This controversy prompted a critical reevaluation of "pakem" (the conventional performance standards preserved over generations), underscoring how resistance can force the community to redefine its aesthetic boundaries.

Empirical evidence from both historical and contemporary cases demonstrates that every attempt to renew *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* is met with resistance. For example, in the 1920s, vinyl record controversies arose when modern musical instruments such as the violin, guitar, and mandolin were introduced, deviating from traditional instrumentation. Similarly, in 1980, a collaboration between *Tembang Sunda*

Cianjuran and *keroncong* music by the Ujung Lautan group sparked disputes over the integration of modern elements. The Sekar Anyar polemic, characterized by the introduction of new ornamentation and a simplification of previously complex decorative patterns, further exemplifies the persistent reluctance to deviate from established traditions. Additionally, Barmara Akhman's work in the 1950s which expanded the repertoire and introduced a standing performance format, mirrors controversies observed in the DAMAS Competition XXIII 2023. These examples collectively highlight that conflicts in traditional arts are not merely rejections of change; rather, they serve to protect the core elements of tradition while prompting constructive debate and negotiation.

The core of the conflict in the *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* performance centres on the theme of the performance, which is considered to deviate from tradition. The presentation of raising social issues, such as juvenile delinquency, challenges traditional customs that tend to focus on mythological stories. For conservatives, this approach is considered too explicit and potentially disruptive to established aesthetic norms. However, the progressive camp, spearheaded by the work's creator, argues that the relevance of art must adapt to the context of its time in order to remain appealing to today's audience. In his argument, he states that the beauty of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* should be able to reach the younger generation without losing its traditional essence.



Figure 2 The opening segment of *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* is conventionally presented. This initial staging establishes the foundation that later becomes the starting point for innovative reinterpretations.

(Source: ISBI Bandung, 2014)

The protest led to a dialogue among various arts community members, leading to the approval of the innovative *Gending Karesmen* format. Nevertheless, core elements like *dongkari*, *wanda*, song, and tuning must be maintained to respect tradition and aesthetic rules of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*. This process reflects Coser's safety valve function, where conflict is not avoided but strengthened social cohesion and responsible adaptation. The result is a contemporary, relevant work that respects traditional aesthetic norms, enriching the aesthetic values of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* and affirming the role of conflict as a catalyst for dialogue, adaptation, and sustainability of traditional art in changing times.

Internal Solidarity and Arts Regeneration

Tembang Sunda Cianjuran, the divergence between conservative and progressive views has paradoxically

fostered strong internal solidarity. This tension compels both camps to collaborate in defending and renewing shared aesthetic values. As Coser (1956) posits, conflict can serve as a group-binding mechanism that enhances internal cohesion. In the case of *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran*, the performance incorporates extensive discussions and negotiations on addressing social issues, modernizing costume designs, and simplifying language, all while maintaining core elements such as *dongkari*, *pirigan*, *wanda*, the incorporation of choir, technological adaptations, dance, accompaniment instruments, songs, and tuning. These dialogues provide valuable insights into the artistic negotiation process, underscoring the importance of a multidisciplinary approach, thorough work analysis, and effective data collection in understanding the complexities of performance production (Untung & Kusumaningtyas, 2024). Ultimately, this process reinforces the traditional aesthetic identity, ensuring the continuity and vitality of the art form.

Within the discourse on innovation in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, the tension between conservative and progressive factions has fostered a unique form of internal solidarity. On one side, the conservative group, represented by Asep Solihin and Yus Wiradiredja alongside academics from ISBI Bandung, exhibits strong resistance to vocal presentation formats perceived as deviating from tradition, particularly in the final projects of Karawitan students. Asep Solihin explicitly voices concerns that overly



Figure 3 The interview between Yus Wiradiredja (Maestro of Cianjuran) and Ubun Kubarsah (Creator of Sekar Anyar) showcases a constructive dialogue between conservatism and progressivism, promoting artistic regeneration in Tembang Sunda Cianjuran.
Source: Arif Budiman, 2014

bold innovations may provoke backlash from the *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* community, known for its staunch adherence to traditional norms. This stance has sparked debates among ISBI Bandung lecturers, prompting critical reflections on the extent to which innovation can be tolerated without compromising the art form's authenticity. Academic institutions, notably ISBI Bandung, remain cautious in decision-making, considering the potential academic and social risks of implementing radical innovations.

However, this dynamic shifted when Yus Wiradiredja, initially aligned with the conservatives, began embracing renewal discourses after encountering robust scientific justification for the urgency of innovation in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*. Ultimately, he assumed the role of mediator between the opposing factions: the conservative camp led by Asep Solihin and the progressive group spearheaded by Ubun Kubarsah and Dian Hendrayana. Ubun Kubarsah, a visionary composer,

asserts that innovation in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* does not constitute an erasure of tradition but rather an effort to contextualize the art form, ensuring its relevance to contemporary audiences. Similarly, Dian Hendrayana emphasizes modernizing lyrics to align the narrative of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* with contemporary social dynamics while preserving its philosophical values.

Meanwhile, Neneng Dinar and Hery Suheryanto occupy an intermediate position between these factions. They strive to balance the preservation of classical aesthetic values with the need for innovation to sustain the art form's appeal to younger generations. As influential *panembang*, they also serve as key informants in understanding public reception, particularly among art enthusiasts toward the performance *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran*. Recognition of this innovation's success came from Wim van Zanten, a Dutch ethnomusicologist, who lauded the artistic approach employed in *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran*.

The debates and negotiations between conservative and progressive factions in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* reveal that innovation in traditional arts is not merely a matter of accepting or rejecting change but rather how to strike a balance between preservation and renewal. The conflict does not threaten tradition; instead, it serves as a negotiation mechanism enabling sustainable artistic regeneration. Through this process, a strategic compromise is achieved by retaining fundamental elements such as *dongkari*, *wanda*, and *pirigan*, while simplifying narratives and exploring adaptive presentation formats. Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran thus emerges as a model of traditional art adaptation that preserves classical aesthetics while incorporating new elements to maintain contemporary relevance.

This concept parallels phenomena observed in Indian traditional performances, where innovation is not viewed as a threat but as a mechanism for sustainability and evolution. Changes in Indian traditional arts demonstrate that tradition possesses inherent flexibility and adaptive capacity without losing its essence (Stock, 2006). This approach disproves the notion that tradition and innovation are inherently contradictory; instead, they coexist within dynamic cultural ecosystems.

By balancing renewal and preservation, *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* sustains its position as an inclusive and evolving form of artistic expression. Rather than being displaced by modernization, it reinforces its position

as an evolving cultural identity. The interplay of conflict and consensus in negotiation processes underscores that artistic regeneration relies not solely on preservation but also on adaptive capacity to address contemporary challenges. Thus, *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* not only endures as cultural heritage but actively contributes to shaping the discourse on traditional art preservation within a global context.

Technological Innovation and The Relevance of The Younger Generation

Traditional arts and culture face significant challenges in transmitting their values from one generation to the next (Nirwana & Nugroho, 2024). In a progressive perspective, art is not only seen as a reflection of tradition but also as a catalyst for social change that has enormous transformative power. Art is capable of arousing collective consciousness, provoking critical thinking, and moving society toward more inclusive goals. This approach emphasizes the importance of maintaining the core values of tradition while allowing for innovative adaptations that are relevant to the context of the times. The works of Rabindranath Tagore and Uday Shankar, for example, blend traditional elements with contemporary interpretations to create new art forms that still honour their cultural roots (Menon et al., 2024; Rockell, 2023; Wilk, 2023). Innovation in traditional art, in this view, does not merely change form but also enriches cultural identity by ensuring the diversity

of artistic expression is recognized and preserved. This approach not only supports cultural preservation but also encourages sustainable art practices and transmits the richness of cultural expressions to future generations (Kanzunnudin, 2011).

In the digital era, technology plays a key role in revitalizing traditional arts. Technological innovation in the *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran* performance is one strategy to connect traditional aesthetic values with contemporary expression needs, especially for the younger generation. The use of multimedia, visual projection, and modern lighting in this performance creates a more immersive experience for the audience. These technologies help convey social narratives more clearly while enriching the performance setting that has been dominated by conventional formats.

This approach is in line with global practices in traditional performing arts. Kathakali dance in India has been updated with modern visuals, and Noh theatre in Japan has used multimedia projections. These are two examples of how technology can bring new life to traditional arts without changing their cultural essence (Menon et al., 2024; Rockell, 2023). These technological innovations in performance have proven effective in attracting new audiences, especially among the younger generation who are more familiar with digital technology. The integration of modern elements helps bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, thus increasing the relevance and appeal of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*.



Figure 4 Performance of Gending Karesmen
Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran
at GK. Sunan Ambu, ISBI Bandung
(Source: ISBI Bandung, 2014)

In addition to the visual aspect, another innovation lies in the use of language in the presentation of lyrics and narratives that are easier to understand, which was previously dominated by old Sundanese language and high *Kejawèn* elements. This adaptation makes it easier for audiences, especially the younger generation, to understand the message of the show, without sacrificing traditional aesthetic values.

Regardless of the pros and cons regarding the issue of violations of *pakem* and *tetekon* in *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, it is important to remember that this art is essentially a human creation. As a result of human creativity, *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran* is naturally open to changes, additions, and innovations to maintain its relevance so as not to become a static and boring art form. This is in line with what Edward Shill said, that tradition is not static but dynamic (Jacobs, 2007). Although the changes are evolutive, they are not progressive. Criticism from those who are fanatical about the traditional concept of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*, such as those who reject *Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran*, tends to ignore the fact

that this art has undergone significant transformations since its inception.

The result of this innovation shows that change in traditional arts does not have to take away its identity. Instead, by utilising technology, language approaches and more contemporary narratives, traditional art can reach a wider audience and ensure its sustainability amidst the times.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that the dialectic between conservatism and progressivism is an essential dynamic in traditional art. Conservatism plays a role in maintaining the authenticity of the core elements of traditional art, both texts and contexts that constitute cultural identity. On the other hand, progressivism encourages innovation that is responsive to sociocultural change, ensuring that traditional arts remain relevant. The performance of "Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran" is a concrete representation of how tradition and innovation can collaborate to produce meaningful works without compromising the authenticity of the art.

The research also found that innovation in traditional arts is not a threat but an opportunity to expand the reach and appeal of the arts to a more diverse audience, particularly the younger generation. In the case of "Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran," the exploration of relevant social themes and the adaptation of a more dynamic *Gending Karesmen* format successfully opened access to new audiences without losing the

aesthetic elements of *Tembang Sunda Cianjuran*. These findings change the perception that traditional arts are only for certain communities, making them more inclusive and cross-generational in appeal.

In the academic environment, this phenomenon provides valuable insights for art students in understanding traditional art as a dynamic medium. Creative approaches that integrate conservative and progressive values, as in "Nyiar Luang Tina Cianjuran," demonstrate that innovation can be a strategic tool for creative regeneration. Furthermore, constructive dialogue between conservative and progressive views proves that responsible innovation can overcome conservative resistance and pave the way for the development of traditional arts that are more inclusive and relevant to contemporary challenges.

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Informant Data

H.M. Yusuf Wireiredja. (65), Lecturer in Karawitan and Maestro of Cianjuran, Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISBI) Bandung. Interview: 20 November, 2013 and January 21, 2025 | Location: ISBI Bandung, Cianjur, Indonesia.

Ubun Kubarsah. (61, deceased), Composer and Sundanese Music Creator. Interview: 20 March 2014 | Location: Jalan Saledri, Bandung, Indonesia.

Asep Solihin. (60, deceased), Performance Consultant and Academic Advisor, Karawitan Program, STSI Bandung. Interview: January 2014 | Location: STSI Bandung, Indonesia.

Dian Hendrayana. (54), Poet and Academic in Sundanese Literature, Faculty of Language and Literature Education (FPBS), Indonesia University of Education (UPI). Interview: April 3, 2014 | Location: UPI Bandung, Indonesia.

Dinar Ratna Suminar. (51), Prominent Cianjuran Performer/Artist. Interview: February 2014 | Location: Wangisagara, Majalaya, Bandung, Indonesia.

Hery Suheryanto. Cianjuran Performer/Artist. Interview: February 2014 | Location: Permata Biru, Cileunyi, Bandung, Indonesia.