

Examining the Impact of the Bubat War Event from the Perspective of Subjectivism in the Modern Era

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami dinamika perubahan identitas masyarakat Sunda pasca Perang Bubat, serta bagaimana peristiwa tersebut terus memengaruhi pandangan mereka terhadap sejarah dan budaya hingga era kontemporer. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam studi ini adalah metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan historis. Tujuan dari metode ini adalah untuk memahami konteks sejarah secara terstruktur serta dampaknya terhadap peristiwa atau fenomena tertentu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Perang Bubat memiliki dampak yang signifikan terhadap identitas dan budaya masyarakat Sunda dan Jawa. Sejarah ini tidak hanya meninggalkan kekecewaan, tetapi juga membentuk perspektif dan sikap budaya yang diwariskan dari generasi ke generasi. Namun demikian, dampak positif dari peristiwa ini justru memperkuat identitas masing-masing suku sebagai kelompok yang mandiri dan kompetitif. Selain itu, dapat dikatakan bahwa pada era modern ini, dampak negatif dari Perang Bubat mulai terkikis dan memudar.

Kata kunci: perang bubat, subjektivisme, era modern.

Abstract

This study aims to understand the dynamics of changes in Sundanese identity after the Bubat War, and how this event continues to influence their views on history and culture into the contemporary era. The research method used in this study is a qualitative method with a historical approach. The purpose of this method is to understand the historical context in a structured manner and its impact on certain events or phenomena. The results of this study indicate that the Bubat War had a significant impact on the identity and culture of the Sundanese and Javanese people. This history not only left disappointment, but also created perspectives and cultural attitudes that were passed down from generation to generation. However, the positive impact of this event strengthened the identity of each tribe as an independent and competitive group. In addition, it can be said that in this modern era, the negative impact of the Bubat War itself has begun to erode and fade.

Keywords: bubat war, subjectivism, modern era.

INTRODUCTION

The Bubat War was a historical event that took place in the 14th century, precisely on Tuesday Wage, September 4, 1357 (Iskandar, 2013: 208). This battle had a significant impact on the development of the history of the Galuh Sunda Kingdom and Majapahit (Hadi, 2010). The beginning of this event was rooted in the arrival of Majapahit envoys to the Sunda kingdom which was then led by Maharaja

Linggabuana. The ancient manuscript Pararaton describes that the envoy was sent by Prabu Hayam Wuruk to propose to the Sundanese princess, Citraresmi, who was scheduled to be married in the Majapahit Kingdom. There were two reasons that encouraged Hayam Wuruk to marry the Sundanese princess. First, the kinship between Sunda and Majapahit which had been well established. Wijaya (Kretarajasa Jayawardhana), the founder

of Majapahit, was the grandson of Prabu Guru Darmasiksa, a Sundanese king. By marrying Citraresmi, Hayam Wuruk aimed to strengthen the ties of kinship that had long been strained. It is only natural that Prabu Linggabuana has the same intention. Second, Citraresmi is known by the nickname wajra (jewel) and has an amazing beauty, which has become a topic of conversation among the people so that it attracts the attention of Prabu Hayam Wuruk (Iskandar, 2013: 197).

This tragic event not only caused deep wounds among the Sunda Galuh Royal Family, but also left a long-term impact on the identity and culture of the Sundanese people (Hadi, 2010). The Sundanese people, through oral history narratives passed down from generation to generation, remember the Bubat War as a critical moment that shaped their collective consciousness. This historical trauma influenced their perceptions of the concepts of power, identity, and relations between regions in the archipelago. In some cases, the legacy of the Bubat War actually strengthened Sundanese ethnic and cultural pride, which is reflected in various aspects of life, such as art, literature, and traditional ceremonies.

As a result of the tragic Bubat War, many lives were lost from the Sunda Galuh Kingdom, including Prabu Linggabuana who died in the battle. This caused a leadership vacuum in the Sunda Galuh kingdom. Niskala Wastu Kencana, the

younger brother of Citraresmi alias Diah Pitaloka, was then appointed as King of Sunda Galuh to continue his father's leadership (Iskandar, 2013). Feeling deeply hurt, Niskala Wastu Kencana established strict regulations prohibiting the Sunda Galuh people from establishing relations or communicating with the Majapahit side, including in terms of matchmaking and carrying out wedding ceremonies (Hadi, 2010). The importance of the Bubat War in Indonesian history lies not only in the tragic events that occurred, but also in the political and social impacts it caused. This event changed the dynamics of power and diplomatic relations between kingdoms in the archipelago, and left a deep mark on Indonesian culture and literature. The story of the Bubat War has been recorded in various historical sources, including the *Pararaton* and *Kidung Sunda* books, which provide deep insight into the event (Afnan, 2022).

The Bubat War, which took place in 1357, had a profound impact on the relationship between the Majapahit Kingdom and the Sunda Kingdom, and influenced the political, social, and cultural dynamics in the archipelago at that time (Afnan, 2022). For the Sunda Kingdom, the impact of the Bubat War was very detrimental. This event quickly changed the Sundanese view of Majapahit from a diplomatic partner to a dangerous enemy (Yamin, 1993: 256). On the side of

the Majapahit Kingdom, although they managed to achieve victory in Bubad, the impact was not entirely beneficial. Prime Minister Gajah Mada, who was famous for his role in triggering this conflict, faced criticism from various circles, including from within the kingdom itself. His aggressive actions were considered to have damaged Majapahit's reputation as a diplomatic power and reduced the level of trust from other kingdoms in the archipelago. Although Hayam Wuruk remained in power, this incident caused internal tensions that could damage Majapahit's political stability (Afnan, 2022).

The Bubad War also brought changes in the dynamics of relations between kingdoms in the archipelago. Many kingdoms that had previously had good cooperation with Majapahit became more wary and increased their vigilance against the ambitions of this great power. Small kingdoms began to feel threatened and tried to find new alliances to protect their sovereignty. This complicated regional politics and made the process of uniting the archipelago under one power increasingly difficult (Hidayat, 2015: 105). Politically, the Bubad War marked a turning point in Gajah Mada's ambition to unite the archipelago. Although he is known for his Palapa Oath, this incident showed the limits of his aggressive approach. This incident taught the importance of more subtle diplomacy and

the need to respect the sovereignty of other kingdoms to achieve regional stability and harmony (Ambarwati, 2022). Socially, the Bubad tragedy became a symbol of struggle and sacrifice for the Sundanese people. The story of Dyah Pitaloka and Maharaja Linggabuana's resistance to Majapahit's wishes are an inseparable part of Sundanese cultural heritage. This story is often expressed in various forms of literature and art, perpetuating the values of honor, courage, and dignity (Afnan, 2022).

The Bubad War tragedy also had an impact on the development of culture and literature in the archipelago. This event was immortalized in a number of literary works, such as *Kidung Sunda* and *Pararaton*. *Kidung Sunda*, for example, describes this tragic story in a very touching elegiac tone, highlighting the heroism and sacrifice of Dyah Pitaloka and her family. Meanwhile, *Pararaton* records this event from the perspective of Majapahit history, although it clearly shows bias towards the interests of the kingdom (Firmaningsih, 2021: 4). The long-term impact of the Bubad War was the formation of a complex historical narrative, in which the relationship between Majapahit and Sunda continues to be remembered with a mixture of pride and regret. This event is a reminder of the importance of diplomacy, respect between kingdoms, and the consequences of excessive political ambition. In the

modern context, the Bubat War is often used as an example of maintaining harmonious relations and respecting sovereignty in interactions between countries and cultures.

The story of the Bubat War is immortalized in various ancient manuscripts such as Serat Pararaton, Naskah Parahiyanan, and Kidung Sundayana. The event that occurred in 1357 left a deep mark in the memory of the Sundanese people to this day, explaining why the prohibition on marriage between Javanese and Sundanese remains strong. The pain experienced by the Sundanese people due to this event continues to be preserved in their memories. Although the current generation did not experience the event directly, they still feel its impact, a phenomenon called primordialism, where the memory of the suffering of ancestors still influences present-day life. The relationship between Majapahit and Sunda, reflected in the history of the Bubat War in the 14th century, formed a stereotype between the two tribes, especially for those who study the history. The influence of the Bubat War still leaves a mark on society, although it is often not realized. Various myths and stories circulate among the Javanese and Sundanese people, creating complex layers of meaning in the relationship between the two parties.

In this case, it can be said that events are not free from subjectivity and objectivity. Subjectivity itself is a concept that is very closely related to researchers, because it is formed by values, norms, myths, and various other factors that influence a person's social environment. These aspects certainly shape an individual's perspective on various things. As Karl Popper expressed, all products of human thought—including myths, metaphysics, stories, and speculation—can be a legitimate source of scientific knowledge. Knowledge, therefore, is an adventure of ideas; these ideas are produced by us, not merely by the reality around us (Mannan, 2016:45; Popper, 1965:95). From this observation, it is clear that a person's social background plays an important role in shaping their thoughts and the development of their life. Humans are always bound by the subjective meanings that surround them, and all social realities have an essential component of consciousness (Susanto, 2015:3). In the realm of science, the subject is often interpreted as "the knower," while the object is "the known." The existence of ideal science is generally expected to be objective, free from subjective elements, and based on empirical observation. According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary, subjectivity refers to "the quality of the investigator that affects the results of observational investigations"

(Peshkin, 1988:17). Therefore, this "quality" affects not only the results of observations, but also the entire research process.

Subjectivity functions as a mixture of nuances that arise from an individual's social class, status, and value system, which interact with the object of research. Peshkin asserts that subjectivity plays a role throughout the stages of research, like clothes that stick and cannot be removed. However, not all scientists realize that subjectivity influences their research. Therefore, it is important for every scientist to recognize and understand the subjectivity that exists within them when conducting research. The influence of subjectivity in science can create differences in how researchers view the world, because scientific knowledge often arises from humanistic ideas that are influenced by mistakes, prejudices, hopes, and dreams (Mannan, 2016:45). Thus, in science, we not only develop theories, but also criticize existing theories (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2018).

This study aims to examine in more depth how the Bubat War event influenced the identity and culture of the Sundanese people throughout history. The focus is on the internalization of the event by the Sundanese people and how it became an integral part of their cultural narrative. This study aims to understand the dynamics of changes in the identity of

the Sundanese people after the Bubat War, as well as the ongoing influence of this event on their perspectives on history and culture in the modern era today. For an in-depth study, this study refers to several research results, one of which is the research conducted by Sondarika, W. et al. (2024) entitled "The Impact of the Bubat War on Identity and Culture", the author seeks to explore further how the Bubat War event influenced the identity and culture of the Sundanese people over time. This study adopts a qualitative approach with a historical design, which includes steps such as problem identification, data collection, source criticism, data analysis, interpretation, and historiography. The results of the study indicate that the impact of the Bubat War lies not only in historical records, but also in shaping perceptions and cultural attitudes that last a long time in Sundanese society.

Meanwhile, Munandar (2010) noted that the King of Sunda, Prabu Linggabuana, was defeated in Majapahit, but the Sunda kingdom remained strong even though Majapahit had collapsed. This study estimates that Majapahit collapsed around 1521-1525, while the Sunda kingdom fell due to an attack by the Banten army in 1579, which was 50 years after Majapahit was attacked by the Demak army. In the study of Auliah Ambarwati (2022: 119), it is stated that until now, belief in the myth of the

prohibition of marriage between the Javanese and Sundanese tribes has not completely disappeared, even though the world has entered the digitalization era. Mythological phenomena with various characteristics can still be found among modern society who believe in this prohibition.

Meanwhile, Supriatin (2018) confirmed the existence of the myth, although he admitted that it was a myth that remained influential. He believed this based on the bitter experience of a newly built household. Considering the couple Juhanto from Java and Kartika from Sunda, they attributed their failed marriage to the myth of the prohibition, referring to the fact that they had violated the taboos that were believed in. Based on the background above, this study aims to examine the impact of the Bubat war in the modern era within the scope of historical structuralism based on the perspective of subjectivity. Reported from previous studies, both research by Sondarika et al. 2024 which examined the impact of the Bubat war on identity and culture with the results of the formation of perceptions and cultural attitudes that persisted in Sundanese society. Then in the research of Munandar (2010) which examined the history and results of the Bubat war and the post-war events of the Bubat war. While in the research of Ambarwati (2022) which examined the cultural heritage of the history of the

Bubat war with the results of the discovery of the mythological phenomenon of the prohibition of inter-tribal marriage still persisting in the modern era. Then in Supriatin's research (2018), which examines the culture and myths of the Bubat war legacy that still survive and the impact of violating these myths.

METHODS

The research method applied in this study is a qualitative approach with a historical design. This method involves collecting data which will then be analyzed descriptively. The historical approach is used by researchers to examine past events or phenomena in depth. The goal is to understand the historical context in a structured manner and the impact caused by certain events or phenomena. The following are the steps in research with a qualitative approach and historical design:

- 1) Problem Identification: The first step is to formulate a problem or research question that is relevant to the historical event to be studied.
- 2) Data Collection: Data is collected through archival research, interviews with historians or living witnesses (if possible), and analysis of related literature such as history books, journals, and previous research.
- 3) Source Criticism: This process aims to evaluate the reliability and

validity of historical sources. It is important to ensure that the information used is accurate and credible. Source criticism consists of external criticism that assesses the authenticity of the source, including the age of the document and its author and internal criticism, which analyzes the content of the source to understand the context and meaning of the historical text.

- 4) Data Analysis: After the data is collected, an analysis is carried out to identify patterns, relationships, and dynamics that are relevant to the research question.
- 5) Interpretation: In this stage, researchers interpret historical data by considering the social, political, cultural, and economic contexts that existed at the time.
- 6) Historiography: Researchers compile historical narratives or descriptions that explaining how the event took place and its impact both in the past and present (Sugiyono, 2013:227).

With these steps, this research is expected to provide deeper insight into the historical events being analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the first stage, this study has raised research questions where this study aims to find out the impact of the Bubat war event from a subjectivism perspective in

the modern era by raising the following questions: (a) Is there an impact of the Bubat war event according to the natives of both tribes in this modern era?, (b) How do modern Sundanese and Javanese tribes respond to the history and impact of the results of the Bubat war?.

The data in this study were obtained from the results of interviews with 2 Sundanese history students and 2 Javanese history students. This is due to the hope that is pinned on "native-based" or data sources from the native tribes who are the sources. In addition, this study is also juxtaposed with documents in the form of relevant research from other researchers to be juxtaposed with the results of the interviews. In addition, historical sources about the Bubat War include various texts and notes from both parties, namely Majapahit and Sunda. Among the various references, the two main sources that are often used as references are Pararaton and Kidung Sunda with the following descriptions:

a. Pararaton

Pararaton, also known as the Book of Kings, is one of the main sources documenting important events in Majapahit history, including the Bubat War. This text offers a perspective from the Majapahit side, often with nuances that support the legitimacy and authority of the kingdom (Padmapuspita, 1996). In Pararaton, Gajah Mada is depicted as a hero who tried to unite the archipelago,

albeit in a controversial way (Brandes, J. L. A, Pararaton, 1920: 36).

b. Kidung Sunda

In contrast, Kidung Sunda is a literary work originating from the Sundanese tradition that presents a different narrative regarding the Bubat War. This text emphasizes the courage and honor of Dyah Pitaloka, as well as the suffering experienced by the Sundanese Kingdom entourage (Afnan, 2022). In Kidung Sunda, Gajah Mada's actions are considered cruel and unjust, thus highlighting the tragic side of the event. The Bubat War has become a topic that has sparked much controversy and debate among historians, especially regarding the authenticity and interpretation of this event (Munandar, 2010: 82-83).

Source Criticism in this study refers to historical documents related to the Bubat War such as Pararaton and Kidung Sunda which are used to take from the results of previous researchers' research. In the Source Criticism step, this study found that a number of historians doubted the authenticity and accuracy of historical sources such as Pararaton and Kidung Sunda. They argue that these texts may have been influenced by the political and cultural biases of their authors (Munandar, 2010: 82-83).

Some experts doubt whether the Bubat War actually happened as described, or whether the event was just a narrative construction that emerged

later to achieve certain goals (Afnan, 2022). Differences in interpretation of Gajah Mada's role in the Bubat War also create a diversity of views. While some view him as a heroic figure in an effort to unite the archipelago, others see him as a cruel and opportunistic leader (Supomo, 1986). The perspectives of the Sundanese and Majapahit sides often conflict, reflecting the broader tensions and conflicts between the two kingdoms.

After the data is collected, the data analysis is carried out by means of descriptive language description where the source of this data is taken from the results of interview recordings that have been transcribed and the description of the data in this study explains the results of the interview transcription that has been trimmed as needed so that the answers from the interview results can be filtered and adjusted to the needs of this study. In analyzing the data, the researcher will provide coding for each interview question, and then describe the core of each interview question. Then, after the interview questions are coded, the researcher categorizes each interview question for data reduction. After the interview results are coded based on their categories, the researcher then draws an outline of the interview answers based on the coding categories. After each category is coded, the researcher then describes it in detail at the interpretation stage and

then describes it again in depth at the historiography stage.

At this stage, the researcher will interpret the data sourced from the interview results and then compare it with external research for data triangulation. After processing the interview data, in this study the researcher found 6 categories of findings consisting of the Impact of the Bubat War that has become part of the Culture, the Impact of the Bubat War in the Modern Era, Modern Ways of Responding to the Impact of the Bubat War, Subjectivist Perspective, Positive Side of the Bubat War, and Negative Side of the Bubat War. In the findings in the category of the Impact of the Bubat War that has become part of the Culture, the researcher found that the Bubat War had a significant impact on the social and cultural order where the birth of hereditary myths between tribes where there was a prohibition on marriage between Javanese men and Sundanese women. This is in line with the findings of Firmaningsih (2021) & Yamin (1993) regarding the impact on culture, literature, and social order.

Then the results of this study are also in line with the findings of Ambarwati (2022) & Supriatin (2018) regarding the myth of the prohibition of inter-tribal marriage and the existence of inter-tribal sentiment after the Bubat war which was based on the findings of Iskandar (2013) & Hadi (2010) regarding the prohibition of

marriage between Sundanese and Javanese tribes due to the hurt feelings of Diah Pitaloka's younger sibling over the tragedy that befell her family.

In the findings in the Impact of the Bubat War in the Modern Era category, researchers found that the impact of the Bubat War in the modern era was not very visible because some participants no longer believed in myths without a logical basis, but some participants believed that the Javanese considered Sundanese women lazy, while Sundanese women built stereotypes that Javanese men cannot be trusted. It can be said that some participants still hold fast to hereditary stories. So that the myth of the prohibition of marriage between Javanese men and Sundanese women still exists as a cultural belief. This finding is in line with the findings of Sondarika et al (2024) which found that there was a negative impact between the Sundanese and Javanese tribes where the tribes badmouthed and competed with each other. In the findings in the Modern Ways of Responding to the Impact of the Bubat War category, researchers found that modern society has begun to abandon cultures such as the prohibition of inter-tribal marriage and even tries to respond wisely to the myths that develop in society, although some who believe will associate myths if the marriage between Javanese men and Sundanese women fails. Several participants also said to act

according to sound logic, mutual tolerance between ethnicities, and stay away from the myth of being an academic.

In the findings in the Subjectivist Perspective category, it was found that there was a social gap between the Sundanese and Javanese tribes due to differences in perception in viewing the history of the Bubad war where the Sundanese tribe felt betrayed by the Javanese tribe, and there was a social gap where the genders blamed each other such as Javanese men who thought that Sundanese women were lazy, and Sundanese women who stated that Javanese men could not be trusted. This is in line with the findings of Munandar (2010) who discussed the differences in historical views between tribes, where the stories told are different in each tribe.

In the findings in the positive side category, the impact of the Bubad war is where participants can learn from this history, and this history indirectly promotes both tribes for their majority on the island of Java, while in the findings in the negative side category, the impact of the Bubad war is where there are differences in perception, subjectivity based on the perspective of each tribe, indications of bias that are preserved from generation to generation, the formation of special rules related to the results of the Bubad war, and cold conflicts between tribes due to myths and special rules that are cultivated. In a comparison between

the positive and negative sides, it can be said that there are more negative sides given by the impact of the Bubad war compared to the positive side of the results of the Bubad war. This can be compared with the findings of Hidayat (2015) which states that the cause of inter-tribal conflict is a manifestation of the loss of trust in the Javanese tribe due to the betrayal of Patih Gajah Mada against the Sunda Galuh Kingdom.

In the realm of the impact of the Bubad war at that time, based on history, it was found that there were changes in political dynamics, damage to relations between kingdoms, and the decline of the power of the Majapahit Kingdom had created a negative image in the eyes of other kingdoms. In addition, there was a leadership vacuum in the Sunda Galuh Kingdom which resulted in negative sentiment among the Sundanese people. In this context, Dyah Pitaloka Citraresmi chose to end her life.

Meanwhile, in the present day, the impact of the Bubad war is diminishing, although there are still some who believe in the myths that are circulating. Based on the findings in this study, it was found that with the emergence of various myths circulating among the Javanese and Sundanese tribes that were passed down from generation to generation, some people from each tribe still maintain the social culture, but some participants abandoned the culture that they thought

had no logical basis. In addition, the impact of the Bubab war in the modern era has fostered a strong sense of identity and pride in the Sundanese tribe towards themselves.

CONCLUSION

The Bubab War had a significant impact on the identity and culture of the Sundanese and Javanese people. This history not only left disappointment, but also created perspectives and cultural attitudes that were passed down from generation to generation. However, the positive impact of this event strengthened the identity of each tribe as an independent and competitive group. In addition, it can be said that in this modern era, the negative impact of the Bubab War itself has begun to erode and fade due to the renewal of the system in both the government, ideology, and technology sectors, although a small part of society still believes in myths that are part of the impact of the Bubab War.

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