

Interactions of Artistic Expressions with Spatial Contexts in the Isolo Performance of Sentani Tribe, Putali Village, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines the connection between the artistic expression of Isolo and the spatial context of the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village, Papua, Indonesia. The analysis focuses on revealing the mutual influence between the artistic expression of Isolo and the spatial context of the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village and how the artistic elements in Isolo contain important values in the local cultural system.

It employs a qualitative case study methodology. Observation of the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival at Khalkote Pier, Papua, interviews with Sentani Tribal cultural experts and local government officials, and visual documentation of performances were used to collect data. It employs Rapoport's concept of Environment Behavior Study (EBS) and Barthes' concept of semiotics.

The research findings demonstrate, among other things, that Isolo's artistic expression and the spatial context of Putali Village have a reciprocal relationship. The artistic expression of the Sentani Putali Tribe derives from the symbolization of cultural, social, and environmental factors. In the meantime, Isolo's artistic expression can inspire social change by establishing and enhancing art studios and strengthening internal and external social relations. Second, it demonstrates that Isolo's artistic expression at the Lake Sentani Festival in 2023 reflects the cultural identity of the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village and carries on the tradition of sustainable wild boar hunting. As the cultural identity of the Sentani Tribe, Isolo's artistic expression reflects the cultural values of unity, brotherhood, environmental preservation, and simplicity. These findings can be used to improve awareness of how individuals perceive their local spatial context.

Keywords: Artistic Expression, Isolo Tradition, Sentani Tribe, Putali Village, Meaning, Spatial Context.

Introduction

As one of the provinces in Indonesia, Papua is a repository of cultural diversity, including traditional arts (Ananta, Utami and Handayani, 2016; Sidiq *et al.*, 2021). The Isolo tradition, which originates from the Sentani Tribe, particularly in Putali Village, is a noteworthy tradition that has become an integral part of the local community's existence. It demonstrates a strong cultural identity and a rich ancestry that must be maintained. This deeply rooted tradition has become an integral part of the local community, vividly reflecting a robust cultural identity and ancestry that must be preserved. While Isolo has left an enduring impression on succeeding generations, there has been no in-depth analysis of its distinctive and symbol-rich artistic representation in this region.

Isolo is a significant cultural tradition among the Sentani people of Papua, characterized by singing and dancing aboard vessels on the tranquil waters of Lake Sentani. Not only does this practice preserve cultural heritage, but it also plays a crucial role in preserving the social structure of the Sentani tribe. During Isolo performances, twenty to fifty dancers form artistic communities on vessels that are ingeniously interconnected. This communal expression connects individual performers with their community, transcending gender and incorporating traditional melodies into a celebration of shared joy.

The arrangement of Isolo's artistic communities on boats symbolizes the incorporation of artistic expression into a larger social framework, thereby nurturing cultural identity. Isolo is a social symbol of the grandeur or authority of the tribal chief, or Ondoafi in Sentani tribal terminology (Rumansara, 2015). Isolo is woven into communal activities such as hunting expeditions, marriages of the children of tribal leaders, and the construction of new chief residences. Isolo has been the focal point of the Lake Sentani Festival since 2007, showcasing its cultural splendor and paying homage to its enduring legacy. However, its introduction to a wider audience remains crucial for preservation. Isolo's magnificence displays the artistic prowess and cultural wealth of the Sentani tribe, uniting artistic expression, environment, and a profound cultural tapestry. This performance embodies the complex dance of human creativity upon the waters, a reflection of the cultural landscape that shapes its essence.

Artistic expression, comparable to a distinct language, utilizes painting, music, dance, and literature to communicate feelings, ideas, and experiences. In addition, it functions as a nuanced medium for communicating cultural identity, capturing history, and expressing emotions that words may fall short of expressing (Assael and Popovici-Wacks, 1989). People can construct a complex and profound symbolic language through various artistic expressions to communicate with the surrounding world, convey cultural identity, comprehend history, and express themselves in ways that are not always possible through words (Peter and Akpan, 2020). Notably, no exhaustive study has examined the complex relationship between Isolo's artistic expression and the spatial context of traditional settlements in terms of cultural identity. In the context of Isolo research conducted by the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village, the concept of spatialization is significant because it is believed that the artistic elements of the Isolo tradition reflect a profound interaction with the context of their settlement (Riswani, Efrinon and Alfalah, 2023).

This study aims to reveal the complex relationship between cultural identity, artistic expression, and spatial context in the lives of the Sentani community in Putali Village. Ultimately, it endeavors to impart a profound appreciation for the significance of preserving and fostering cultural traditions amid change. The objectives of this research are: 1) to elucidate the intricate relationship between the spatial context of Putali Village and Isolo's artistic expression, and 2) to decipher the cultural and symbolic significance embedded within the tradition. This study contributes to the advancement of art and cultural studies in Papua by shedding light on the symbiotic relationship between Isolo's artistic expression and the spatial framework of Putali Village. By doing so, this research contributes to both academic scholarship and cultural appreciation, providing a comprehensive understanding of the essence of Isolo in the culture of Sentani Tribe.

Theoretical framework

The Environment Behavior Study (EBS) can explain how the physical environment affects human behavior (Rapoport, 2005). The EBS theory states that humans and environments interact dynamically (Kar and Sarkar, 2017). The theory emphasizes that human behavior and the physical environment influence each other. EBS also recognizes that the physical environment and human behavior are interrelated and influence each other in a social and cultural setting (Krajhanzl, 2010; Meng and Si, 2022). The EBS hypothesis states that the physical environment affects human behavior in three dimensions: physical, social, and psychological. Shape, scale, and layout represent the physical dimensions of the environment. Social interactions within the environment, such as those between people and social organizations, represent the social dimension. In contrast, psychology includes perceptions, emotions, and subjective environmental experiences. The theory emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between human behavior and the physical environment. EBS theory also recognizes that the physical environment and human behavior are interrelated and influence each other in a social and cultural setting. Rapoport (2005) demonstrates how the environment, religion, social institutions, and culture influence the multifunctionality of a home. A house is a cultural phenomenon influenced and regulated by the civilization that created it. Culture influences house design and layout. People choose to live in houses that satisfy their cultural needs because they foster culturally appropriate behavior.

Cultural values should guide the organization of home spaces. Considering the complex idea of the household in EBS theory (Labibzadeh *et al.*, 2015) Isolo exhibits similar characteristics where cultural and social factors influence the meaning and function of an item or activity. This is because Isolo represents culture, environment, and social systems. The relationship between behavior and residential space in Rapoport's EBS theory is depicted in Figure 1 below:

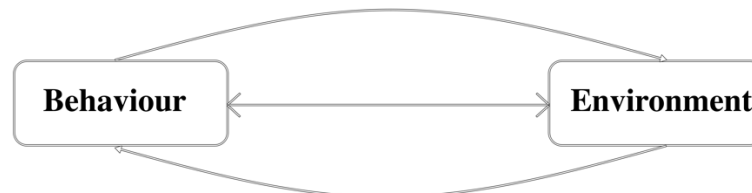


Fig. 1: Schematic of the relationship between the concept of behavior and the environment based on Rapoport's EBS Theory.
Source: Rapoport, 2005.

Rapoport's EBS concept serves as the foundation for the conceptual framework of this study. This study investigates the relationship between artistic expression and the physical environment of Putali Village. The analysis begins with Isolo as an artistic phenomenon. Isolo of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village is a symbolic artistic expression of regional cultural values (García-Alonso *et al.*, 2022). It consists of artistic elements, which are the primary components of the performance. As an expression of individual and communal thoughts, emotions, experiences, and knowledge, artistic expression can reveal information about the environment, cultural values, and social systems of individuals or communities (Kluckhohn, 2017). Human interaction with the external environment, as well as the influence of the culture, history, and customs of the inhabitants, shape the spatial context. The spatial context includes geographical location, settlement layout, natural surroundings (such as Lake Sentani, the Cycloop Mountains, and sago forests), and the social and cultural composition of the community. Symbolically, the spatial context is related to how people perceive their environment, both physically and socially. Therefore, a good understanding of cultural values in artistic expression

can influence people's perception of environmental awareness (Boas, 2015). In turn, the environment and spatial context can influence how people engage with and create art. Conversely, artistic expression provides an opportunity to investigate its impact on the spatial context.

Symbolic artistic expressions require specialized research to be comprehended in greater depth. Therefore, Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is employed in the study of artistic expression and its components. Roland Barthes' concept of semiotics is a comprehensive theoretical examination of how signs and symbols in culture convey meaning beyond their physical representation, especially in social science and artistic studies (Pradoko, 2016). Any object, action, or representation can have denotation and connotation (Dweich and Al Ghabra, 2020; Granqvist and Siltaoja, 2020; Ali, Khan and Qureshi, 2021). Denotation refers to the literal or descriptive meaning of a sign, whereas connotation refers to the deeper meaning associated with broader cultural associations, emotions, or perceptions (Yulita, Marlina and Kencanasari, 2021). Barthes' significant and relevant semiotic concepts are applied to the analysis of the artistic elements of the Isolo performance of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village within the context of this research. This research explains the denotation and connotation of each artistic element, including the significance of each movement, costume, music, and performance attribute, using this methodology.

By utilizing Roland Barthes' semiotics, this study reveals the cultural values, mythology, and social relations concealed within Isolo's physical appearance. The EBS theory facilitates an understanding of how the natural environment of Putali Village has influenced the physical manifestation of Isolo's artistic elements, addressing the research objectives regarding the relationship between artistic expression and spatial context. Semiotics, which enables us to decipher the cultural meanings and stories embedded in these gestures and expressions, complements this. We can discover how the physical landscape of Putali Village inspires Isolo's artistic expressions and how these expressions convey cultural values and interactions by combining both theories. Furthermore, semiotics is a powerful tool for uncovering the cultural and symbolic meanings embedded in the Isolo performance at the Lake Sentani Festival 2023 by revealing the symbolic meanings behind the various elements of Isolo. This enables us to interpret movements, costumes, and other artistic elements as semiotic signals that communicate cultural values, beliefs, and history. The incorporation of EBS into this objective enhances our understanding of how the natural environment has influenced the formation and evolution of these symbols. The collaboration between EBS and semiotics discloses patterns of interaction between artistic expression and the spatial context of Putali Village.

Literature Review

Based on Rapoport's concept of the relationship between Behavior and Environment, it is fascinating to observe the connection between artistic expression and spatial context. This is because their relationship is reciprocal and exhibits signs of mutual influence. Peradantha (2019, 2020, 2021, 2023; 2020; 2022), Gunawan (2023), Vedhajani and Amirtham (2023), Darmawati (2022), and Rohendi Rohidi et al. (2017; 2023) have conducted research demonstrating the influence of spatial context on artistic expression. The spatial context of the physical environment in which we live and interact is not only a backdrop for creativity, but also a crucial catalyst in artistic and architectural design processes. In this instance, the spatial context takes into account the impact of cultural factors, religion, social systems, and environmental adaptation. Previous research concurs that artistic expression is a reflection of the synthesis of a society's local culture, social systems, and environmental adaptations. For more complete comprehension, however, the findings of previous studies require additional research into the potential reverse relationship between how artistic expression influences behavioral patterns or more complex spatial contexts.

Additionally, artistic expression can impact space in a broader spatial context. Physical space influences the formation of social relationships, according to Small and Adler (2019), Kalina (2022), Nykonenko (2022), Alle (2012), and Mikhailov (2021), through mechanisms such as spatial proximity, spatial composition, and spatial configuration. They provide relevant

insights and theoretical foundations concerning artistic expression in the context of settlements. According to Ruspawati (2023), the vernacular architecture of Pura Dalem Kangin serves as a source of inspiration for site-specific choreographic artistic expressions that are staged directly at the site using techniques for adapting architecture and rearranging space. However, this research is limited to the extremely specific context of temple architecture, leaving the opportunity for future research on spatial influences with a broader scope. According to Hussain et al. (2021), cultural symbols and artistic rituals are profoundly embedded in spatial contexts, communicating complex meanings that go beyond mere visual appeal. Cultural norms, values, and social dynamics in Malaysia are reflected in their findings that artistic expressions are not isolated phenomena but are intricately intertwined with the physical environment. Even though the research is conducted in Malaysia and is limited to the field of literary arts, Hussain has opened the door to further studies on the Isolo tradition among the Sentani tribe from a variety of perspectives. In addition to being an artistic event, the symbolic artistic manifestation of Isolo from Putali Village demonstrates its influence by environmental, social, and cultural forces.

Although existing research considerably contributes to our understanding of the relationship between artistic expressions and spatial settings, it is evident that there is a gap in our understanding of the Isolo tradition of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village. Artistic expressions in the context of ethnic performing arts have not been extensively discussed in previous research. To bridge this gap, the current research will utilize Rapoport's Environment Behavior Research (EBS) concepts and Barthes' semiotic concepts. These theoretical lenses promise to provide a comprehensive comprehension of how the physical environment and cultural meanings influence artistic expressions in Isolo.

This literature review highlights the significance of critically evaluating prior research to inform the present study on the spatial context of the Isolo tradition's artistic expressions. In the context of Isolo's research in the Sentani tribe of Putali Village, this phenomenon seems to need a deeper analysis with the right methods, such as combining analytical methods and semiotic theory. This will provide a deeper understanding of the symbolic artistic expression in Isolo, a feat not previously accomplished for comparable artistic phenomena in Papua, Indonesia. The objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between creative expressions and their spatial surroundings. By building upon the existing research, this investigation aims to uncover the ways in which cultural meanings are embedded within artistic traditions.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative case study methodology. The case study method is a research strategy that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon by collecting and analyzing specific data within its true context (Rebolj, 2013; Patnaik and Pandey, 2019; Takahashi and Araujo, 2019). In this study, the case study method was employed to investigate the relationship between artistic expression in the Isolo performance and the spatial context and natural environment in Putali Village. This methodology facilitated a comprehensive understanding of how the artistic elements of Isolo interact with the physical environment and hold profound cultural significance.

During the Lake Sentani Festival, multiple Isolo performances, including those from Putali Village, were observed. To enhance the data, interviews were conducted with key performers, such as Marthen Monim and Jimmy Sokoy, on July 10, 2023, in Putali Village. Marthen Monim, as a native leader and the leader of the Isolo team, was considered a reliable source of pertinent information. He provided valuable insights into the community's perspective on Isolo, the establishment of the art community within Isolo, and the relationship between Isolo's traditional context and the natural environment. Jimmy Sokoy, an Isolo performer from Putali Village, was also interviewed. Appointed by Marthen Monim, Jimmy Sokoy assisted in understanding the significance of dance movements, costumes, and other visual elements in Isolo. He explained how these elements reflect the relationship between nature and Isolo culture, as well as their cultural significance.

Additionally, interviews were conducted with culturalists from the Sentani Tribe, including Corry Ohey from Ohey Village, and Levinus Philemon Modouw from Waena Village. These individuals were selected as informants due to their expertise in Papuan culture and their frequent involvement in discussions on Papuan culture. The researchers used their insights to compare and reinforce the data provided by Jimmy Sokoy and Marthen Monim. The respective village leaders authorized the individuals involved in this research to discuss the regulation of the arts community within Isolo. The informants were considered knowledgeable and capable of providing academic insights into Isolo. Visual documentation, including photographs of the Isolo performance in Putali Village during the Lake Sentani Festival, was collected from an informant responsible for providing information on the government's role in the implementation of Isolo. These visual records serve as empirical evidence to support the analysis of how Isolo's artistic elements are perceived within the festival context and how they interact with the physical environment.

The analysis of the acquired data will be conducted utilizing Rapoport's Environment Behavior Study (EBS) and Barthes' semiotic principles, which involve observations, interviews, and visual documentation. The EBS approach will aid in understanding how artistic expression in Isolo interacts with the surrounding natural environment and spatial context, while the semiotic approach will facilitate the interpretation of cultural meanings embedded within the artistic elements. This research is expected to reveal the intricate relationship between Isolo's artistic expressions, the physical environment, cultural meanings, and their interactions through a combination of diverse data collection techniques and comprehensive analysis strategies.

Findings and Discussions

Spatial Context Inspires Isolo's Artistic Expression

Rapoport's Environment Behavior Study (EBS) concept describes the dynamic relationship between the environment and human behavior. In this research, the EBS concept is utilized to examine the correlation between spatial context and artistic expression. The spatial context of the Sentani tribal settlement in Putali Village serves as a source of inspiration for Isolo's artistic expression, which constitutes the primary discovery of this study. As a Sentani tribal settlement, Putali Village embodies a spatial context steeped in cultural and social values (see Fig. 2). The landscape plan depicts the village's territories and boundaries through numerical symbols. Putali Village is situated amidst Sentani Lake, with Yoboi Village to the west (1) and Abar Village to the south (3). The topography of Putali Village (2) includes islands, water bodies, and sago forests (4).

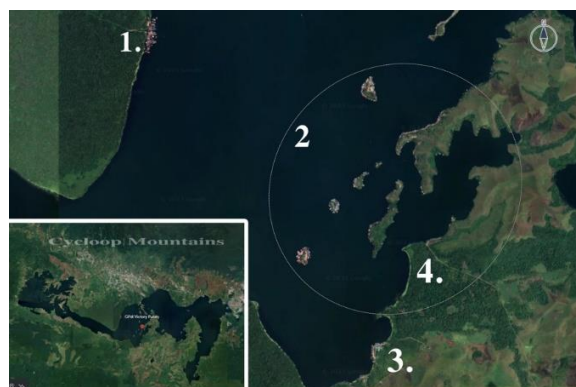


Fig. 2: The Putali Village Landscape plan inside the white circle. Inset: Map of Lake Sentani and the Cycloop Mountains Area

Source: Google Earth, modified by Peradantha, 2023

Typical houses in Putali Village are constructed on platforms (see Fig. 3). The layout of the traditional dwellings reflects a shrewd adaptation to the natural environment, while the waters of the lake and the sago forest to the south of the village serve as a source of daily sustenance and a significant symbol in the Sentani tribe's spiritual life. In this context, Isolo's artistic expression is organically integrated with the spatial context, generating harmony between culture, nature, and community, particularly in their performance at the Lake Sentani Festival in 2023.



Fig. 3: Sentani tribe's vernacular settlement (on the left) with a boat as the daily transportation (on the right).

Source: Peradantha 2023.

In 2023, the Lake Sentani Festival will take place from July 5 to 7, 2023. The event's epicenter was Khalkote Pier in the East Sentani District of the Jayapura Regency. Figure 4 depicts the motif of the Isolo performance of the Sentani Tribe from Putali Village at the Lake Sentani Festival in 2023. The locals' daily activities, which include continuing the tradition of wild boar hunting, served as the inspiration for this motif. The artistic components of the Isolo performance interpret this theme in an integrated way. According to the research, the artistic elements of Isolo, such as costumes, body painting, music, dance movements, and boat decorations, have profound meanings and intricate symbolism.



Fig. 4: The Isolo Artistic Community of the Sentani Tribe from Putali Village.

Source: Peradantha, 2023.

The natural environment significantly influences the artistic elements of Isolo in the performance by the Sentani Tribe from Putali Village at the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival. The dance elements symbolize the condensed and vigorous nature of hunting activities. Two dancers perform arrow-playing movements, while another dancer sings while wielding a wooden spear and occasionally striking the water with a wooden spear adorned with an old

coconut, creating a vibrant and resonant water-splashing effect. Furthermore, two dancers bearing arrows depict archery motions. These movements are intended to convey triumph and happiness after a successful hunt in the forest. The water splashes represent the successful capture of their prey by the hunters. Visually, this conveys a symbolic message from the dancers to the villagers, prompting the community to prepare a welcoming performance celebrating the hunters' successful return from their hunt.

The sago forests and forests in the Cycloop Mountains serve as inspiration for the subsequent artistic element: costumes. Concerning hunting activities, the garments of the Sentani tribe from Putali Village in Isolo exhibit a strong relationship with and profound inspiration from the surrounding environment. The "haninggesa" headdress is crafted from a vine species that naturally grows in the village forest (Fig. 5). In contrast to the conventional headgear in traditional Papuan dance, which is made of cassowary bird feathers, this costume features a circular arrangement of braided tree trunks that envelop the dancer's head. In addition, the performers wear garments called "purai" at the waist. This waistband is constructed from sago leaves strung together with a rope.



Fig. 5: "Haninggesa," the head costume in the Putali tribe's Isolo tradition at the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival.

Source: Peradantha, 2023.

Abstract body painting motifs of the Isolo performers of the Sentani Tribe from Putali Village enhance their visual appearance. The individuals burnish their bodies with charcoal dissolved in water. According to Jimmy Sokoy, the use of this nature-inspired costume represents the long-standing hunting tradition that dates back to their ancestors' time, facilitating hunters to conceal themselves as they track their targets. Sokoy added that even though the Lake Sentani Festival is a tourist attraction, they still wish to preserve Isolo's historically authentic visual appearance.

The Isolo community of Putali Village performs several traditional melodies related to wild boar hunting. However, these melodies are considered sacred and should not be shared. Nevertheless, according to Levinus Philemon Modouw, a Sentani academic and cultural expert from Waena Village, there is a hymn called "Bhuyakha" that holds significance in Sentani culture. Members of the Sentani tribe residing in various villages frequently sing this hymn, which has a general nature. The Isolo artistic communities from different villages in Sentani also commonly utilize this song, depending on the specific Isolo performance theme being presented (interviewed on July 11, 2023, in Waena Village, Jayapura City). We present the song passages used in Table 1 as follows, based on the information provided:

Table 1: The Isolo songs that are sung in common by the Sentani Tribe.
Source: L. Philemon Modouw, 2023

Lyrics	Means
Bhuyakha bhuyakha, (bhuyakha ya)	Hi, you Sentani people: Yes, we are Sentani people
Bhuyakha bhuyakha, (bhuyakha ya)	
Bhuyakha e a, e..e..e	Hi, you Sentani people: Yes, we are Sentani people
Bhuyakha ya o, o..o..o	
Ejo ejo, ejo ya	We are proud to be Sentani people
Ejo ejo, ejo ya	
Ejo e ya, e..e..e	Hi you, people from the village (Yes, we are from the village)
Ejo yo o, o.. Oo..oo	Hi you, people from the village (Yes, we are from the village)
Fela fela, fela ya	Our proud homeland together
Fela fela, fela ya	
Fela e ya, e..e..e	Hey guys, let's go hunting (Let's go hunting)
Fela ya o, o..o..o	Hey guys, let's go hunting (Let's go hunting)
Wi, wo.. wo wo wo wo	We are proud to hunt together
	Shouting together

According to the lyrics, Bhuyakha is the traditional designation for the Sentani people. The root term 'bhu' signifies water, while 'yakha' conveys meanings of 'calm', 'clear', or 'blessed'. Therefore, Bhuyakha refers to those residing near waters that are pure, transparent, and blessed; in this context, Lake Sentani (Modouw, interviewed on July 11, 2023 in Waena Village, Jayapura City). The chant's text also radiates a sense of communal pride. The word 'ejo' indicates the term 'village'. Additionally, the melody of the song narrates the Sentani people's traditional activities. This aligns with the theme of the performance and the artistic expressions encapsulated in Isolo (Corry Ohey, interviewed on July 13, 2023 in Ohey Village, Jayapura Regency). The act of hunting, referred to as 'fela' in the Sentani language, is also depicted. The vocal performance by the Isolo group from Putali Village does not necessitate any specific musical instruments.

While Isolo artistic communities in other villages might incorporate instruments like the *tifa*, *triton*, and *kelambut*, the Putali Village Isolo community generates sounds through the use of spears, arrows, and existing wooden branches. The technique involves creating rhythmic sounds by striking the wood against the boat's floor or exterior. This instrumental-less performance signifies their unwavering commitment to preserving their authentic identity and values, even within the setting of the Lake Sentani Festival attended by tourists. The artifacts and embellishments on the boats used by the Sentani tribe of Putali Village further enhance their Isolo artistic expression. Positioned at the boat's center, a wild boar is prominently displayed on a wooden platform (Fig. 6). In Sentani culture, wild boars hold significant value as game animals. This is due to their utilization in various traditional contexts such as marriage, dowries, customary feasts, and exchanges with neighboring villages. During the 2023 Isolo performance at the Lake Sentani Festival, Putali Village residents tied and suspended a wild boar by its legs using a purpose-built structure. The inclusion of the boar as a performance prop exemplifies the profound influence of spatial context in their artistic representation.



Fig. 6: A wild boar (inside the yellow circle) as part of the property in the Isolo performance by Putali Village, representing hunting activities in the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival.

Source: Peradantha, 2023

The adornments on the Isolo boats of the Sentani tribe in Putali Village hold significant and symbolic connotations. The decorative element known as 'Ay', comprised of a pair of wooden poles adorned with coconut or sago leaves and attached to the boat's stern, signifies the successful hunt by the forest hunters (Fig. 7). Jimmy Sokoy emphasizes that these embellishments are not erected in the absence of a successful hunt. Aligned with the hunting tradition of the Sentani tribe in Putali Village, the 'Ay' ornament is crafted solely when the hunters triumphantly secure a game animal, such as a wild boar, from the forest, after which it is affixed to their vessels. This ornament is deliberately incorporated during the Lake Sentani Festival to amplify the vibrancy of the Isolo performance.



Fig. 7: A pair of Ay (shown in the black arrow), a boat decoration of the Sentani tribe of Putali village marking the success of obtaining game animals.

Source: Peradantha, 2023.

The vessel used in the Isolo performance of the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village during the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival is made of wood and fiberglass with a modern engine attached. The vessels measure approximately 4 meters in length and 1.8 meters in width. For the Isolo performance, two vessels are combined into one through a rope. Thus, they can construct a boat that can accommodate approximately 30 performers plus props and decorations. Natural materials such as coconut leaves, sago leaves, banana leaves, and croton leaves are used to decorate the canoe. Prior to the recognition of modern machine technology, the Sentani people

typically used traditional wooden vessels known as “Khayii” (Corry Ohye, interviewed on July 13, 2023 in Ohey Village, Jayapura Regency). This vessel typically measures approximately 5 meters in length and 2 meters in girth. Figure 8 depicts the dimensions of the smaller fishing vessels used by the Sentani women, which are approximately 3.5 meters long and 1.2 meters wide. In the context of Isolo, they link two to four vessels to accommodate approximately forty dancers. These vessels are carved with village-specific symbols to establish the identity of each village. Today, traditional vessels are typically only used for daily activities, such as women fishing in the middle of a lake or traveling to nearby islands or villages.



Fig. 8: The *Khayii* is a traditional boat used for fishing by the Sentani people.
Source: Kayoi, 2023.

Usually, the artistic community or performers in an Isolo group from Putali Village on a boat are organized as depicted in Figure 9. Two arrow performers are positioned at the very front. The existence of this arrow dancer is indicative of two simultaneous signals. First, the arrow dancers indicate that the hunter party is escorted to and from the hunting forest. Jimmy Sokoy says that in the social system of the Sentani tribe of Putali Village, both clans play important roles: the Sokoy clan as a warlord and the Mehue clan as “Abu Afa” or Ondoafi’s advisor (interviewed on July 10, 2023, at Putali Village).

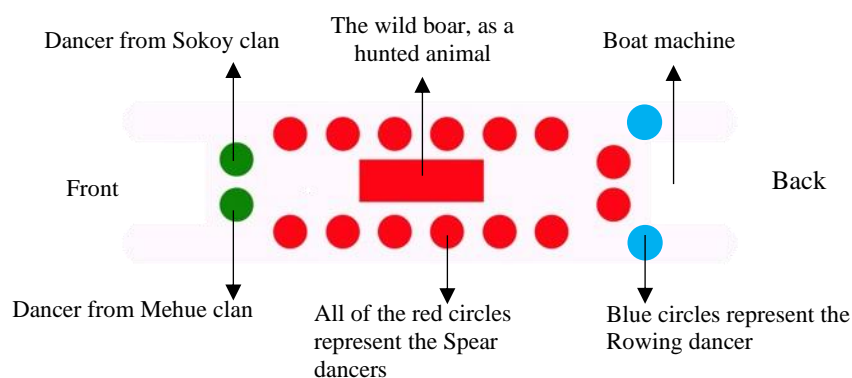


Fig. 9: Composition of Isolo dancers from the Sentani tribe of Putali Village on a boat, at the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival.
Source: Peradantha, 2023.

The Influence of Isolo's Artistic Expression on the Spatial Context

In addition to the strong influence of the spatial context on the formulation of Isolo's artistic expression in Putali Village, this study has revealed that artistic expression also significantly impacts the spatial context of Putali Village, especially within the framework of

the Lake Sentani Festival. This impact can be observed both physically and in terms of behavior. Firstly, the annual Lake Sentani Festival has provided each village with the opportunity to establish art studios. According to Fred Modouw, the coordinator of the Lake Sentani Festival, the Jayapura Regency government allocates Rp 20,000,000 (around USD 1300) to each studio to support the Isolo artistic community's preparation (interviewed on October 24, 2022 at Jayapura Regency Culture and Tourism Office). Marthen Monim and Jimmy Sokoy from Putali Village, as well as Corry Ohey from Ohey Village, confirmed this information, which proved to be sufficient in motivating the community to prepare for Isolo. This exemplifies the harmonious and synergistic relationship between the government and indigenous communities in their joint efforts to preserve Sentani culture. The establishment of community dance studios strongly signifies the impact of artistic expression.

Secondly, the establishment of these studios isn't just for short-term annual requirements; it's also a means to facilitate the transmission of Isolo's local knowledge and wisdom to the younger generation. In an interview, Jimmy Sokoy emphasized that the Isolo tradition was facing challenges prior to the Lake Sentani Festival. This was due to the fact that Isolo's performance in its traditional setting couldn't be scheduled. It was subject to the Ondoafi's discretion and timing, often aligning with specific traditional events. However, after Isolo became the centerpiece of the annual festival, Sokoy noted an increased motivation to preserve the tradition among the performers in Putali Village. The elders and artisans of Putali Village are actively encouraging the younger generation to carry on this tradition. Notably, participation in the Isolo artistic community is open without restrictions based on gender or age. Whoever masters the traditional dances and songs of the Sentani tribe is welcome to be part of the Isolo artistic community. This phenomenon underscores that artistic expression transcends mere performances; it deeply permeates community interactions.

Thirdly, the community's sustenance activities continue to thrive sustainably. These activities encompass hunting, whether for wild boar or fish in the lake, and the gathering of sago from the village forest. Similarly, the traditional use of boats and ships for transportation persists. These practices serve as robust indicators that Isolo's artistic expression has cultivated a sustainable paradigm that honors nature and the surrounding environment. They also reflect the ongoing commitment to environmental preservation.

Fourthly, implementing Isolo as an artistic manifestation within the Putali Village community strengthens the social bonds among its members. When executing Isolo at Khalkote Pier in Ohey Village, the artistic community would anchor their vessels in Ohey Village while awaiting their turn to perform at the pinnacle of the event. The distance between Ohey Village and Putali Village is approximately 7 kilometers (Fig. 10). In a spatial context, this underscores that social connections extend over considerable distances. This annual interaction positively contributes to the reinforcement of social ties between villages. All of these symptoms prove that Isolo's artistic expression has a profound influence on shaping patterns of behavior, communication, and values in the spatial context of Putali Village. Thus, Isolo's artistic expression not only affects the individual level but also inspires broader changes in the spatial context of community life as a whole.

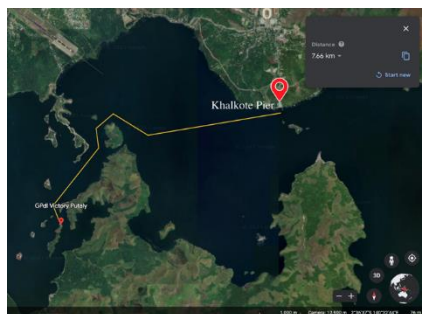


Fig. 10: The Isolo trip route from Putali village to the Khalkote pier in Ohey village.

Source: Google Earth, accessed on August 30, 2023.

Isolo values in semiotic analysis of artistic elements

Table 2 presents the semiotic elements in Isolo's artistic expression based on Barthes' semiotic concept. Each semiotic element is described based on the concepts of denotation and connotation presented.

Table 2. Semiotic Analysis of Isolo's Artistic Expression in Roland Barthes' Semiotics.
Source: Peradantha, 2023

No.	Semiotics Elements	Denotations	Connotations
1.	Arrow and Spear Dancers	A pair of Arrow Dancers dance with representative movements of archery. Brandishing a spear and hitting the water.	A sense of excitement and patriotic spirit.
2.	Head and waist Costume	Haninggesa is used as a head costume and Purai as a waist costume.	Costumes made from natural materials are used as camouflage when hunting in the forest, allowing hunters to blend in with their surroundings.
3.	Body Paintings	Black abstract motifs are utilized as a visual enhancement in Isolo performances.	The use of this particular motif serves as camouflage for hunting purposes.
4.	Bhuyakha song's lyrics	Bhuyakha's song verse is one of the central parts of Isolo's artistic expression.	Provides a message of love for the homeland, simplicity, and the value of unity.
5.	Wild boar property	Wild boar as a hunted animal.	Exhibit a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment.
6.	The "ay" element	Ay as a decoration to enliven Isolo's display.	Ay is more than just a decoration, as it is also a sign of nonverbal communication about the gains of hunting.
7.	Vessels	The connected vessels are assembled into a single unit.	The merging of vessels reflects the spirit of unity and collaboration in collective endeavors.
8.	The performers	The artistic arrangement of performers and props in a boat Only male performers participate in the artistic community of Isolo in the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village.	Reflects a solid and organized social structure. The representation of hunters is an important aspect of the Putali Village tradition.

From the semiotic analysis of Isolo's artistic manifestation, it can be deduced that the Isolo performance by the Sentani Tribe of Putali Village holds significant value. These values are deeply rooted in the cultural identity and heritage of the Sentani people. Costumes made of natural materials such as plants serve to emphasize the importance of conservation and the community's reliance on the natural environment. The Sentani culture is closely intertwined with a reverence for nature and a commitment to preserving ecological balance. The abstract black body paintings on the hunters symbolize their tenacity, while the boat's decoration with natural materials from the surrounding environment, showcases the locals' wisdom and responsible resource management.

Furthermore, the interaction between Isolo's artistic expression and the spatial context of the settlement in the midst of Lake Sentani underlines the significance of community solidarity and the values of togetherness. The Isolo performance, as a collective art form involving numerous individuals, underscores the importance of cooperation and collaboration in the daily lives of the Sentani people. This highlights their cultural emphasis on communal values and cohesion. Isolo embodies the sociocultural influence of the ondoafi, symbolizing the magnificence of the ondoafi and the pride of the Sentani village. The arrangement and positioning of participants on the Isolo boat reflect the social hierarchy and cultural identity of

the Sentani, accentuating the importance of fairness, respect, and clearly defined roles within their society. These artistic components demonstrate how the Sentani preserve and transmit their cultural values from one generation to the next.

The semiotic analysis of Isolo demonstrates that the artistic expression in Isolo reflects significant Sentani cultural and environmental values. The costumes made from natural materials and the boat's adornment with natural materials from the surrounding environment demonstrate the significance of conservation and the dependence of the community on the natural environment. This demonstrates that an appreciation of the performance's value and significance can increase community awareness of the environment, both the geographical and social environments. By promoting the preservation of Lake Sentani, Sago Forest, and animals in the wild, strengthening social relations, and supporting the development of art studios, awareness of the environment and cultural preservation can be increased. Moreover, interaction between artistic expression and spatial context in Isolo emphasizes the significance of solidarity and communal values in the daily lives of the Sentani people. This demonstrates the significance of comprehending cultural values in influencing how individuals perceive environmental and cultural consciousness. Consequently, Isolo can be viewed as an illustration of how artistic expression and spatial context can mutually influence one another and reflect significant values in Sentani culture and society.

Conclusions

Based on all the conducted analyses, it can be concluded that integration of Rapoport's Environment Behavior Study (EBS) concept with Barthes' semiotics has effectively revealed the interaction pattern of Isolo's artistic expression within the spatial context of the Sentani Tribe's Putali Village. The specific findings of this study are as follows:

1. There exists a reciprocal relationship between artistic expression and the spatial context in the Isolo tradition of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village. Spatial elements like the Cycloop Mountain Forest, Sentani Lake, and Sago Forest serve as inspirations for artistic manifestations. Conversely, the influence of artistic expression on the spatial context is evident through the physical structure of the dance studio, thereby reinforcing both internal and external social relationships. In other words, the interaction between artistic expression and the spatial context of the Isolo tradition within the Sentani Tribe's Putali Village is mechanical or interdependent.
2. The Isolo performance during the 2023 Lake Sentani Festival reflects the cultural identity of the Sentani Tribe and perpetuates the well-preserved local tradition of wild boar hunting.
3. The Isolo performance of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village is infused with values derived from significant factors, including cultural, environmental adaptation, and social elements. The artistic manifestation of Isolo, as the cultural identity of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village, embodies values such as unity, brotherhood, environmental preservation, and simplicity.

This study has effectively described how the Isolo tradition of the Sentani Tribe in Putali Village upholds its cultural identity within the context of the Lake Sentani Festival. However, It is crucial to highlight that the scope of this study is confined to Isolo art performances within Putali Village. The Sentani Tribe is one of the largest tribes, comprising 24 villages, each with its own diverse artistic expression. Given the inductive nature of this study, generalizations are limited to artistic phenomena with similar characteristics. Hence, a comparative investigation is imperative to identify artistic distinctions among various Isolo regions. This approach will aid in understanding the variations and differences in artistic expressions, symbolic meanings, and interactions with the spatial context across different village settlements.

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