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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Revealing the Symbolism of Ebeg Banyumas Performing Arts Practices in Social Media

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Abstract: This study aims to uncover the meanings embedded in the practice of *Ebeg Banyumas* performing arts on social media, which potentially gives rise to new forms of practice, including modes of presentation, popularization, and the meanings produced. Previous studies have shown that an anthropological approach can reveal contested interpretations within creative processes. Building on this, the present study explores gender stigma negotiations, the impact of globalization on traditional arts, and the symbolic meaning within digital transitions. The research was conducted through digital ethnography on Facebook and YouTube, utilizing informant interviews, content excerpts, and scholarly literature. The findings indicate that social media facilitates a redefinition process, transforming *Ebeg Banyumas* from a sacred ritual into an aesthetic object, thereby enabling it to reach broader audiences. Ultimately, this transformation gives rise to new roles: preserving tradition, promoting nationalist discourse through local identity, and creating new economic spaces. Social media emerges as a dynamic space for performance art, rich with transitions and adaptations, generating new identities, roles, statuses, and forms for *Ebeg Banyumas*.

Keywords: *Ebeg Banyumas*, Digitization, Social media, Symbolic studies, Performance anthropology.

***Abstrak**: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap makna-makna yang terkandung dalam praktik seni pertunjukan Ebeg Banyumas di media sosial yang berpotensi memunculkan bentuk-bentuk praktik baru, termasuk cara-cara penyajian, kepopuleran, dan makna-makna yang dihasilkan. Penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya telah menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan antropologi dapat mengungkap interpretasi yang diperebutkan dalam proses kreatif. Berdasarkan hal ini, penelitian ini berbeda dengan penelitian sebelumnya dengan menyoroti negosiasi stigma gender, dampak globalisasi terhadap kesenian tradisional, dan makna simbolik dalam transisi digital. Penelitian ini dilakukan melalui etnografi digital di Facebook dan YouTube, dengan menggunakan wawancara informan, kutipan konten, dan literatur ilmiah. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa media sosial memfasilitasi proses redefinisi, mengubah Ebeg Banyumas dari sebuah ritual sakral menjadi sebuah objek estetis, sehingga memungkinkannya untuk menjangkau khalayak yang lebih luas. Pada akhirnya, transformasi ini memunculkan peran-peran baru: melestarikan tradisi, mempromosikan wacana nasionalisme melalui identitas lokal, dan menciptakan ruang ekonomi baru. Media sosial muncul sebagai ruang yang dinamis untuk seni pertunjukan, kaya akan transisi dan adaptasi, yang menghasilkan identitas, peran, status, dan bentuk baru untuk Ebeg Banyumas.*

***Kata kunci**: Ebeg Banyumas, Digitalisasi, Media sosial, Studi simbolik, Antropologi pertunjukan.*

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1. Introduction

As a form of traditional performing art, *Ebeg Banyumas* has undergone a transformation in its mode of presentation, particularly through its migration into digital platforms. This shift is evidenced by the emergence of online communities, such as KompasSatria@media info *janturan* (the spiritual transition of the dancers, when they enter a trance-like state believed to be induced by spiritual entities or ancestral spirits) on Facebook, which hosts approximately 298,000 members and generates around 30 posts daily, as well as the KYEB (Komunitas Youtuber *Ebeg Banyumas*) network. On YouTube, a 2023 video titled "*JANTURAN ❗ EBEG BANYUMASAN SEKAR WAHYU JATI SARI LIVE IRATAN"* (Paguyuban Seni Kuda Kepang Banyumasan Sekar Wahyu Jati Sari, 2023) has accumulated over 777,000 views, while an 11-second reel titled "*Ebeg Turonggo Sekar Laras*" (Mlabel, 2023) has reached 1.3 million viewers. Social media platforms serve as key channels for presenting this art form. Facebook is generally used to announce live performance schedules via group features, whereas YouTube functions as an archive for full-length recordings. This phenomenon has the potential to generate new practices, including shifts in presentation formats, processes of popularization, and the symbolic meanings embedded within the performances.

Despite the growing visibility of *Ebeg Banyumas* in digital spaces, existing studies have yet to explicitly examine the dynamics of change in its artistic practices as shaped by social media. This raises critical questions regarding how such transformations affect the symbolic meanings and cultural representations produced within and around the tradition. Most previous research has remained focused on conventional descriptions of the practice, the role of community membership in sustaining its existence, and traditional performance formats. Nursakti (2024) describes *Ebeg Banyumas* as ancestral heritage and a vital element of the nation's cultural diversity, preserved by various segments of society. Employing an ethno-choreology approach, Rizki & Lestari (2021) analysed one *Ebeg* community in Cilacap and identified a tripartite performance structure—opening, core, and closing—although stylistic elements varied. Meanwhile, Jantro & Kiswanto (2023), in their study of a Javanese diaspora group in South Sumatra, highlight adaptation processes in staging, musical accompaniment, and costume choices to align the performance with local cultural contexts and audience preferences.

Previous studies have largely remained limited in scope, as they continue to focus on conventional descriptions of *Ebeg Banyumas* (Nursakti, 2024), its traditional performance formats (Rizki & Lestari, 2021), and the resistance to change among Javanese diaspora communities in South Sumatra (Jantro & Kiswanto, 2023). Consequently, the digitalization of the practice and its symbolic dimensions have yet to be thoroughly explored. This study seeks to address that gap by examining the symbolism embedded in *Ebeg Banyumas* performances as mediated through social media. It is grounded in the argument that digitalization—particularly within social platforms—has opened up new possibilities for transformation, including shifts in discourse, modes of presentation, and the interactions among key elements such as performers, audiences, and broader communities. Leeker et al. (2017) argue, the pervasive presence of digital media in everyday life has redefined how individuals express identity, engage in representation, perform routines, and experience the world. By bridging traditional and digital contexts, this research introduces a methodological approach not previously applied to the study of *Ebeg Banyumas*. It, therefore, contributes a new perspective to understanding the digitalization of performance and offers insights into narratives of appreciation and preservation of traditional arts.

Building on the previous discussion, this study poses the research question: How is symbolic meaning constructed within the practice of *Ebeg Banyumas* on social media? The primary aim is to uncover the meanings embedded in these digital practices. This issue holds the potential to reshape traditional practices and beliefs, alter individuals' perspectives on cultural heritage, generate novel spatial experiences, and enable new forms of connection and (Senyao & Ha, 2022; Cho & Kim, 2017; Nirwana & Nugroho, 2024). This aligns with the understanding that technology has transformed how performing arts are created, produced, and experienced by audiences, therefore opening opportunities for artists to innovate through video projection, visual effects, and interactive technologies. Consequently, digitally mediated art can be viewed as a pathway toward the democratization and revolutionary evolution of the arts (Badaruddin, 2023; Capra et al., 2020; Seo & Bergeron, 2017).

2. Literature review

2.1. Performance digitalization

Referring to The Digitisation of Performance Art by Burgoyne (2012), performance art is initially defined as an activity closely linked to the exploration of the human body and the emotional exchange between performers and audiences. He further expands this definition by including elements such as audience participation, materiality, environment, and media. Performance art is rich in sensory exploration, which necessitates digitalization to homogenize its various elements within conventional performances. Digitalization condenses all captured material into a unified form (Tyng Shiuh, 2020; Wang, 2021). In this regard, performance art demands an advanced level of digitalization to better preserve and communicate the sensory responses of the audience (Meloni & Allasso, 2023). The components involved in the digitalization of performance include recordings of the performances, supporting documentation such as photographs, digital descriptions of the performance, audience responses and interpretations, technical knowledge encompassing software, and additional information related to digital data (Burgoyne, 2012; Mitsopoulou et al., 2024). Therefore, significant technological advancements open new potentials for digitizing art forms with futuristic aspirations.

Burgoyne (2012) emphasizes that the digitalization of performance art focuses on audience interaction, technology use, and spectator participation. The methodology involves collecting metadata such as content, documentation, and artist interviews. A Springer book chapter highlights that digital data can generate new relationships within previously unseen spatial-historical dimensions, thereby introducing transformations, challenges, and breakthroughs in performance art (Tam, 2023). Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of adopting new methodological approaches to manage big data in performance studies. Further, Barricelli et al. (2021) argue that the digitalization of contemporary art can create novel user experiences that are unpredictable. Their research stresses the necessity of collaboration among diverse expert communities to develop cross-media digitalization capable of designing new uses for digital experiences. Reflecting on these studies, digitalization of performance can be understood as the conversion of sensory data into digital formats. As such, it prevents degradation and supports conservation efforts. However, the migration of artworks across various digital formats can alter perception due to distortions in modes of presentation (Yanuartuti & Winarko, 2019; Zhang et al., 2025). Hence, a more collaborative and interdisciplinary approach is essential to ensure the accurate preservation of performance art (Yuliati et al., 2023).

2.2. Symbolic studies

Symbolic studies constitute a branch of anthropology that focuses on symbolic and meanings within cultural contexts, first introduced by Clifford Geertz. He conceptualizes culture as a complex system of symbols, encompassing everything that carries meaning beyond its physical form, such as rituals, myths, and language (Hendro, 2020). Another key figure in cultural interpretation is Victor Turner, who developed a particular interest in rituals by viewing them both as social dramas and as religious expressions of the sacred (Bigger, 2009). Symbolic studies aim to understand how every human activity embodies symbolic meaning, shaped through social interactions (Turner, 1975). Turner identifies several elements within symbolic studies: symbols as dynamic forces in social processes; as instruments of power to legitimize authority or challenge power structures; as multivocal phenomena that are context-dependent; and as triggers of social action functioning as focal points for mobilizing interaction and shaping behaviour (Turner, 1975). He draws on Arnold van Gennep's work on rites of passage, which include birth, marriage, and death. Turner's focus is on the concept of limen, or liminality, referring to transitional thresholds. Van Gennep further details the pre-liminal separation or isolation from the community and the post-liminal reincorporation phase (Bigger, 2009). Symbolic studies often employ interpretive approaches to explore the meanings embedded in symbols utilized within various cultural practices (Dadze-Arthur, 2017; Kumari & Kumar, 2024).

In symbolic anthropology, symbols are categorized according to their functions within society, including religious, social, and political symbols. The analysed aspects typically involve symbolic meanings, contexts of use, and their impact on social behaviour. Research in this field often employs qualitative methods such as ethnography, including participant observation and in-depth interviews (Ayala & Koch, 2019; Overton, 2017). This theoretical framework is exemplified in Geertz's studies on religion in Morocco and Indonesia, where he identified how religious symbols both shape and reflect social structures and cultural values (Ramli, 2012). When applied to performing arts, interpretation of meaning remains central, especially in the transition from analogue to digital modes of presentation. Monteiro (2022) demonstrates that performance is a bodily art containing bodily symbols, serving as a space for artistic expression and as an object of the artwork itself. Turner offers multiple perspectives on symbolic studies, emphasizing the importance of understanding symbols within the contexts of social action and processes. Krüger (2021) critiques traditional anthropological approaches to performance by proposing a contemporary theatre anthropology approach that gives greater attention to concepts such as drama, performance, and dramaturgy, aiming to reveal desires, expectations, and conflicts of meaning within artistic processes.

2.3. *Ebeg Banyumas*

According to historical archives of Banyumas documented in Sukari (2021), Banyumas is a region in Central Java Province situated at the border between the Sundanese and Javanese ethnic groups. Its location, far from the Yogyakarta Hadiningrat or Mataram courts, has contributed to the rich diversity of performing arts in the area. The arts in Banyumas are characterized by four main aspects: (1) sacredness, as they are linked to specific rituals; (2) training in agility or martial exercises; (3) a medium for religious preaching; and (4) entertainment. Sukari (2021) note that trance (possession) or *wuru* is a distinctive feature of this art form, making it one of the oldest traditional performances in the region. The history of *Ebeg Banyumas* remains debated due to the difficulty in tracing its origins (Handayani et al., 2018). Nevertheless, oral traditions passed down through generations associate this art with the cavalry training of Prince Diponegoro during his

resistance against Dutch colonial forces. The performances were frequently held to inspire the spirit of popular resistance against colonizers during that period.

This performing art has spread across nearly all villages in 27 sub-districts, ranging from the west bank of the Luk Ulo River in Kebumen on the eastern side, to the border area of West Java on the west (Handayani et al., 2024). The term “ebeg” is also found outside Banyumas, including in West Java, Yogyakarta, and East Java, known by other names such as *Jaran Kepang*, *Kuda Lumping*, *Jathilan*, and *Reog*. Functionally, this art was initially closely tied to sacred religious ceremonies but has since transitioned into entertainment. Moreover, *Ebeg Banyumas* serves as a medium for multicultural cultural interaction, characterized by performers and audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds (Jantro & Kiswanto, 2023; Krisnawati et al., 2019). Choreographically, it consists of three main parts: an opening, a core, and a closing segment (Bugov, 2024). This art is distinguished by the *Banyumasan* style, recognizable through its sharp and broken movements, emphasizing shoulder and hip gestures. Additionally, the *Banyumasan* style can be identified by the forward-bent position of the index finger. Studies by Nuraeni et al. (2022) and Nursakti (2024) reveal a variety of conventional performance structures in *Ebeg Banyumas*. However, both studies have yet to specifically address the practice of *Ebeg Banyumas* within social media platforms.

3. Method

This study focuses on how digital media intervenes in the practice of *Ebeg Banyumas*, considering that the presence of digital media in performing arts opens opportunities for redefining artistic practices, expressing traditional art identities, representing cultural elements, and creating new experiences for audiences. Social media enables broader access and contributes to the preservation of traditional arts. Furthermore, the digitization of traditional performances raises various issues, including authenticity, decrease in popularity, and sacralization. The choice of this topic stems from the significant role digital technology plays in various aspects of life, including the arts, as well as the need to understand how digital media generates new meanings for *Ebeg Banyumas*. By examining the digitization of performing arts, this research aims to offer a meaningful contribution to the development of more effective and inclusive art preservation strategies.

In order to explore these issues, this study employs a qualitative method through a digital ethnographic approach. Digital ethnography adapts several conventional ethnographic techniques to study culture and cultural practices based on computer-mediated texts (Kozinets, 2010). The scope of this digital research is limited to social media, focusing on the Facebook group KompasSatria@media info janturan, the YouTuber community *Komunitas Youtuber Ebeg Banyumas* (KYEB), and YouTube. Both platforms demonstrate significant communication networks, evidenced by high posting frequency and user interactions. Primary data consist of interviews with digital practitioners of *Ebeg Banyumas* and digital excerpts such as content, texts, and various interactions within the platforms. Secondary data include literature studies. Data collection was conducted through observations of the YouTube channel and Facebook group, in-depth interviews with digital practitioners of *Ebeg Banyumas*, and literature review. The data gathering took place over a three-month period from September to November 2024 across the aforementioned social media platforms.

The subjects of this study are *Ebeg Banyumas* artists who are actively involved in the digitalization of the performance art. Informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure their relevance to the research issues. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the detailed experiences and perspectives of digital practitioners of *Ebeg Banyumas*.

Meanwhile, observations on the YouTube channel and Facebook group allowed the researcher to comprehend the digital interactions occurring within the KompasSatria@media info janturan group, the *Komunitas Youtuber Ebeg Banyumas* (KYEB), and YouTube, therefore facilitating a direct understanding of the dynamics of the digitalization process. The collected data were analysed by identifying patterns, leading to the emergence of five main themes. The analytical process involved transcription of interviews, data coding, and interpretation. Furthermore, the results were compared with relevant theories and previous studies to produce a comprehensive and in-depth research finding.

4. Result

This study reveals three significant findings related to the symbolism in the practice of Ebeg Banyumas art on social media. First, the presentation of Ebeg in its digital form shows a visual and narrative transformation adapted to the digital format, without losing its traditional symbolic meanings. Second, social media opens opportunities to expand audience reach, enabling this art to be more widely known and easily accessed across regions and generations. Third, there is a reconstruction of interaction between the audience and the performance through comments, shares, and virtual reactions, creating new forms of engagement. These findings confirm that digitalization serves as a strategic means to maintain the existence and relevance of Ebeg Banyumas in the modern era, as evidenced by the three key findings in this study.

4.1. *Ebeg Banyumas* presentation in digital form

Ebeg Banyumas art is now presented through various social media channels such as Facebook, Reels, and YouTube. This study finds that social media has transformed the mode of presentation, particularly in terms of visualization and the performance perspective. The camera becomes the primary determinant of the audience's viewpoint, replacing the direct, in-person experience typical of traditional performances. This indicates an adaptation of the presentation style to suit the characteristics of digital media. These changes are not only technical but also influence how the public understands and appreciates Ebeg. This visual context is detailed further in this study (see Table 1).

Table 1. Presentation of Ebeg Banyumas on Facebook, YouTube, and Reels

Category	Description	Figure
Ebeg Banyumas presentation on the KompasSatria@media info janturan channel	A teenage girl skillfully dances the *Ebeg Banyumas* dance. The uploader comments, "*Jogete asik banget*" (The dance is really fun).	
Ebeg Banyumas performance on YouTube - Mame channel	The *Ebeg* performance from the Ebeg Tua group in Kutasari, Baturaden is presented on Mame channel and has been viewed 2.9 thousand times.	

Ebeg Banyumas performance on Reels	A female *Ebeg* performer is seen in a trance or unconscious state.	

Source: Social media observation.

Table 1 illustrates that through social media, the *Ebeg* art can be presented in various formats such as Reels, YouTube, and Facebook. Each platform has its own characteristics. YouTube allows for unlimited long-duration viewing of *Ebeg* performances, while Facebook is generally used to upload documentation in the form of photos, stories, or reels. However, the reels feature is limited to short videos with a maximum duration of 90 seconds.

The informant explained that the digitalization process of *Ebeg Banyumas* began with watching conventional *Ebeg* performances. The informant and friends would attend these shows carrying tripods and two devices to record videos or take photos of the performances. The informant applies a specific strategy in presenting *Ebeg Banyumas* by recording the original video, titling it according to the performance segment, and adding hashtags such as #ebegbanyumasan, #banyumas, #kesenian, #indonesiaculture, #video, #youtube. Additionally, the description column is also tagged with the same hashtags as in the title. The purpose of these hashtags is to reach a wider audience and make the content easily searchable using relevant keywords.

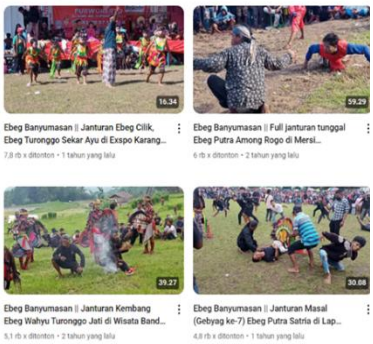
> “It’s like, miss, is that all done using Kinemaster or sort of thing? That app is kind of like a tool so the video can’t be easily taken or stolen by others. So, it’s something like that, like a phone step, miss.”

Digital technology enables the presentation of *Ebeg* performances to be modified through specific applications and various features, such as zooming in or out to clarify aspects of the performance, adding intros to highlight the content creator’s signature style, applying visual and audio editing effects, and using hashtags to expand the post’s reach. These social media features offer benefits that enhance the quality of *Ebeg* performances. The implication is that they can attract the attention of digital audiences. For example, an informant explained that they use an application not to edit their work, but to minimize the risk of it being re-uploaded by others.

4.2. Reaching a broader and easier audience for *Ebeg Banyumas*

The widespread use of social media has driven a more revolutionary transformation of the Ebeg Banyumas art, particularly in terms of dissemination and accessibility. Social media enables people from various backgrounds and locations to easily, quickly, and without geographical limits access Ebeg performances. This phenomenon broadens the audience reach, including younger generations who were previously less familiar with traditional arts. Furthermore, this ease of access encourages increased participation and interest in Ebeg within the digital space. The positive impact of this easier access is detailed in the data presented of this study (see Table 2).

Table 2. Broader reach and audience appreciation

Category	Description	Figure
Ebeg Banyumas presentation on the KompasSatria@media info janturan channel	A teenage girl skillfully dances the *Ebeg Banyumas* dance. The uploader comments, "*Jogete asik banget*" (The dance is really fun).	
Ebeg Banyumas performance on YouTube – Mame channel	*Ebeg* performaces from various groups and locations are presented on a single channel.	

Source: Media social observation.

Table 2 illustrates that the informant recounted the beginning of their activity in digitizing *Ebeg*, which originated from their hobby of watching *Ebeg* performances in the Purwokerto city area. Through this, the informant established mutual acquaintances within the community. The first meeting occurred in April 2022 at Prompong Field, Kutasari Village, Baturaden Subdistrict, Banyumas Regency, where the informant met a photographer and *Ebeg* performer videographer named Pae Agus, who is also a YouTuber focusing on *Ebeg Banyumasan*. Pae Agus advised recording every *Ebeg* performance to be uploaded on social media. The expectation was that each uploaded content would influence others to watch *Ebeg* and increase the digital presence of the performers.

> "The purpose is that when someone, for example, comes from Purwokerto but is currently living away from home or outside the city and wants to watch an Ebeg performance that took place last month or last week, they can simply search on YouTube using the keyword 'Banyumasan.' The main point is that we are preserving and maintaining this tradition." (Mame)

> "These media platforms are currently developing. So, my basic idea in forming this community is to preserve the Ebeg Banyumas art. Because there is a concern that the future generations might not know about Ebeg Banyumas due to the progress of time. Yes, because of the times, the children of future generations might not be familiar with this art." (Mame)

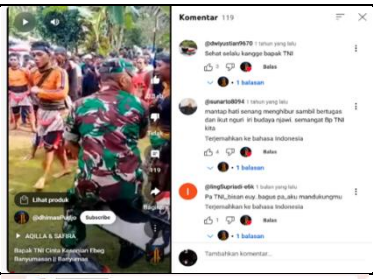
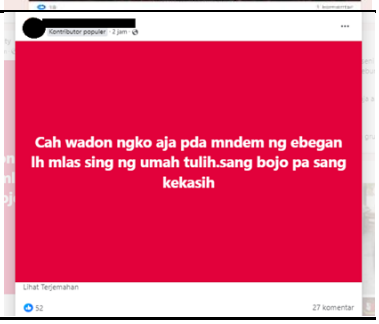
Table 2 illustrates that *Ebeg Banyumas* can be accessed and enjoyed by a broad audience regardless of time and place. With easy and efficient access, audiences are able to watch multiple *Ebeg* performances simultaneously. This contrasts with the traditional setting where *Ebeg* is typically viewed in an open field, limiting the possibility of watching different performances at the same time. Ultimately, the findings demonstrate that social

media has facilitated new revolutionary practices in art by promoting the identity of *Ebeg*, its performers, and *Ebeg* content creators.

4.3. Reconstruction of audience interaction with *Ebeg Banyumas* in the virtual realm

Social media has not only transformed the presentation format of *Ebeg Banyumas* but also influenced the way audiences interact with the performance. The research findings reveal that digitalization through social media platforms creates a more open and dynamic space for interaction. Audiences can now express their appreciation directly through features such as likes, comments, and shares, while also engaging in discussions that deepen their understanding of the art form. This pattern of interaction differs from the more limited experience of traditional settings. Detailed data on these interaction changes are systematically presented in this study (see Table 3).

Table 3. Dynamics of audience interaction

Category	Description	Figure
Audience interaction in comments on the YouTube channel	Digital audiences appear to express appreciation and enthusiastically inquire regarding the schedule of the next upload.	
Audience interaction in the comments section on Reels	A member of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) is seen performing the Ebeg dance with one of the *Ebeg Banyumas* groups. He receives tremendous appreciation from the digital audience for being entertaining.	
Audience interaction in the comments on Facebook channel	A post announcing the performance schedule of one *Ebeg Banyumas* group on the KompasSatria@media info janturan channel.	
Audience interaction in the comments section on the Facebook channel.	Negotiation by audience members suggesting that women should not perform *Ebeg*, expressing concern for the emotional impact it might have on their families and partners.	

Sources: Media social observation.

Table 3 illustrates how social media has created new practices, tones, and styles for *Ebeg Banyumas*, as reflected in audience interactions. In conventional *Ebeg* performances, interaction between performers and spectators was limited—even though they occurred in the same physical space. One reason for this limitation was the time constraints of live shows, as well as the common advisories for audiences to maintain a safe distance from the performers for safety reasons.

However, the dynamics shift significantly in the digital context. As shown in Table 3, social media encourages interactive spaces between audiences and *Ebeg Banyumas* performers—mediated through content creators. For instance, the KompasSatria@media info janturan page actively functions as an information hub for *Ebeg* performances across the Banyumas residency and even in Jakarta. It also serves as a forum for discussion or venting, often regarding conventional Ebeg shows. Topics range from "what it feels like to be in a trance," parking fees, to negotiating the suitability of women performing *Ebeg*. One post, for example, sparked a string of comments, including: "*cah wadon ngko aja pda mndem ng ebegan lh mlas sing ng umah tulis. Sang bojo pa sang kekasih*," (Girls, later don't get too carried away at the ebeg performance, okay? The ones at home will be annoyed — like your husband or your lover.) which can be interpreted that girls should avoid going into trance while watching *Ebeg*, as it could bring negative stigma to their family and partners.

In this context, content creators are positioned as intermediary agents in delivering *Ebeg Banyumas* performances digitally. Unlike conventional performances, which can only be enjoyed during the live event with limited access, social media automatically creates a different power relation in the art of Ebeg compared to its traditional form. The implications of these interactions motivate content creators to continuously upload *Ebeg Banyumas* posts. On the other hand, social media can also cause digital knowledge gaps. These gaps occur when not all content creators possess the same level of knowledge and technology to operate digital tools. Similarly, audiences do not all have equal access or ability to use digital technology.

5. Discussion

The research findings indicate that social media has introduced new dynamics to the *Ebeg Banyumas* art form and has had a significant impact on the community. Social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Reels have presented innovative performance styles, allowing modifications to the presentation in line with technological advances and the digital practitioners' knowledge. This ease of access has broadened the audience reach and opened new economic opportunities for vendors around the performance areas, including the sale of food and Ebeg-themed souvenirs. Furthermore, audience interaction has evolved through various forms of appreciation, discussions about performance schedules, and negotiations of social norms. However, these developments also bring challenges, such as digital knowledge gaps caused by limited technological access and competition among digital *Ebeg* practitioners. Additionally, copyright violations have arisen due to the potential for unauthorized downloading and reuploading of videos, threatening the preservation of *Ebeg* works on social media.

The practice of social media in the *Ebeg Banyumas* art does not stand alone but complements the direct practices in the field, forming a mutualistic symbiotic relationship. Social media serves as a platform for exchanging digital knowledge among content creators, encouraging exploration and innovation in presenting *Ebeg*. Easily accessible documentation allows people from various regions to enjoy *Ebeg* with just one click. This study highlights significant changes in the style of Ebeg presentation through platforms such as YouTube and Facebook, which facilitate access and expand audience reach. In addition

to opening economic opportunities for vendors around performance areas, social media also poses challenges, such as digital knowledge gaps due to unequal access to technology and copyright violations through unauthorized downloading and reuploading. Therefore, efforts to address these issues are necessary in order for the benefits of social media can be fairly enjoyed by all *Ebeg* practitioners.

This phenomenon reflects the important role of social media in transforming the practice of *Ebeg Banyumas* as a bridge between tradition and modern technology. Social media enables the dissemination of knowledge and innovation in *Ebeg* presentation, creating a mutualistic symbiosis between conventional and digital practices. As a dynamic symbol in social processes, social media functions to legitimize authority and mobilize social interactions, as explained by Turner (1975). The presence of *Ebeg Banyumas* on social media is also multivocal, offering diverse meanings — as entertainment, cultural preservation, economic resource, or expression of identity. Furthermore, technology has redefined the aesthetic experience, including the relationship between performers and audience as well as the atmosphere of the performance. Digital devices facilitate various activities such as streaming, recording, uploading, and sharing content, significantly changing how communities interact with and manage the art of *Ebeg Banyumas* (Leeker et al., 2017).

Unlike previous studies, this research reveals that the digitalization of *Ebeg Banyumas* art sparks diverse dialogues, ranging from experiences of trance and parking fees to negotiations regarding conventional performance practices. The use of technology redefines the aesthetic experience, including the relationship between performers and audiences as well as the overall performance atmosphere. Digital interactions and presentations show that symbolic meaning extends beyond the visual to the performative, marking an adaptation of traditional culture to modern technology. There is a shift in meaning—from originally sacred to becoming a source of livelihood through content monetization—aligning with Hassan's (2020) perspective on digital capitalism. The social media presence of *Ebeg* also contributes to spreading nationalism discourse grounded in locality, consistent with Rai (2017) and Punathambekar & Mohan's (2019) concepts of digital media and collective identity. Additionally, the study highlights the symbolism of the dancer's body as a space for artistic expression, though digitalization simplifies visual aspects, diminishing the original symbolic meaning embodied in the dancers.

The analysis reveals that digitalization produces multiple meanings as well as new challenges for *Ebeg Banyumas*. Therefore, training and workshops are necessary to improve digital literacy among *Ebeg* practitioners. This study recommends further in-depth research on the impact of social media on the presentation style of *Ebeg Banyumas* through an ethno-choreographic approach, as well as the effects of digitalization on local vendors. Copyright regulations are also essential to protect practitioners from infringements and to ensure inclusive access along with the establishment of communities that share digital knowledge. This research reflects the position of *Ebeg Banyumas* at the intersection of digital modernity and conventional creative tradition. Digitalization opens opportunities for conservation through audience expansion but also brings challenges of commercialization that shift the meaning from sacred to commercial (Imamah et al., 2024; Permatasari et al., 2020; Suprihono et al., 2022). Hence, sustainability strategies are needed to maintain a balance of cultural values so that this art remains preserved amid ongoing developments (Keitumetse, 2011).

6. Conclusion

The practice of social media in *Ebeg Banyumas* has implications for the redefinition of this traditional art. This study confirms how social media has significantly transformed the face of *Ebeg Banyumas* by creating substantial changes in symbolic meanings—from audience interactions, forms of presentation, to impacts on the wider community. These symbolic meanings are evidenced by the emergence of digital dialogues including experiences of trance, parking fees, and negotiations on conventional *Ebeg* performances. The use of social media in this study enables the dissemination of knowledge and innovation in *Ebeg* presentation, thereby creating a mutualistic symbiosis between conventional and digital practices through collaboration. *Ebeg Banyumas* adopts new symbolic meanings, transitioning from sacred meanings to an aesthetic object, therefore allowing it to reach a broader audience. The implications include roles in cultural preservation, spreading nationalism discourse through local identity, and creating new economic spaces. The transition from analogue to digital art in this study is rich with the context of "adaptation," involving the application of various digital rules such as content formats and audiovisual features. Ultimately, this transition reflects the meaning of liminality—a shift in creating new identities, roles, statuses, and forms for *Ebeg Banyumas* practitioners.

The contribution to anthropology from this study shows differences from previous research on *Ebeg Banyumas* and digitalization. First, the digitalization of *Ebeg Banyumas* initiates negotiations regarding gender stigma that prohibits women from participating in conventional *Ebeg*. These negotiations illustrate how digitalization contributes to the emergence of interaction dynamics. Second, it adds a variable by understanding the impact of globalization on traditional arts through the process of adaptation. The presence of *Ebeg* on social media requires an adaptation process initiated by the practitioners themselves in utilizing technology and social media, which takes time. Third, it enriches the analysis of symbolic meanings that can be understood through the transition from analogue to digital, which is essentially observing how this art adapts in new ways. Ultimately, it introduces the concept of liminality according to Turner in the context of digitalization.

However, this study has several limitations and weaknesses. From a methodological perspective, this research employed a qualitative method with a digital ethnography approach that is case-specific, so future studies may consider using quantitative methods. Such methods can measure the economic impact of *Ebeg* socialization media in a statistically quantifiable manner. In terms of scope, this study only focused on the Facebook and YouTube platforms, which may not fully represent the overall picture. Therefore, future research can broaden the digital scope or employ different methodologies. Additionally, within the scope of the area, this study focused on the Facebook group KompasSatria@media info janturan and the Facebook group KYEB (Komunitas YouTuber Ebeg Banyumas), therefore, it is possible that other regions might exhibit different impacts. Regarding the research subjects, future studies could involve the wider community beyond *Ebeg* practitioners to identify broader public perspectives on the digitalization of *Ebeg*. In terms of time, future research can revisit the topic in different periods or eras, which might yield different results due to temporal differences. From a theoretical standpoint, this study used the lens of symbolic anthropology and performance digitalization, producing interpretative research based on meaning derived from phenomena. Therefore, other studies may apply different theories to understand the digitalization of traditional arts, such as discourse theory by Michel Foucault, which could hypothesize how *Ebeg Banyumas* digitalization can be seen as a new discourse form that changes how this art is perceived and practiced. Another theory, by Stuart Hall, could offer hypotheses on how local cultural identities are formed and negotiated through social media.

Author Contribution Statement

Contributions of the authors in this article: Anindya Laksmi Larasati contributed as concepts and drafters of the article; as data analyzers and interpreters; as the drafter of the manuscript; contributed in collecting data and critically revising the article. Author agree to take responsibility for all aspects of this work.

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