HISTORY OF LEGONG DANCE;
MEANING AND SYMBOLS OF BALI ISLAND
IN THE 20 CENTURY

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Abstract

Balinese dance is very interesting to be enjoyed because in addition to its dynamic movement also moves almost the whole body of the dancer especially the game of eye gleam, but more than that balinese dance in addition to the dazzling entertainment also has meaning and symbols that are often closely related to religion or human social life every day. One of them is Legong Keraton dance a very interesting and meaningful classical dance and symbol of Bali island as aesthetic expression of human being which can be understood from the technique of dancers while it is also of course contextually related to the science of sociology and anthropology of this dance in meaning and is The symbol of the island of the gods.

Keywords: Legong Dance, Bali, meaning, symbol

Introduction

Historical writing appears not only driven by philosophical curiosity which questioning the origin and direction of human destiny or humanity. It also begins as an attempt to place itself in the midst of the universe and within the strands of time. In the history of historiography appears that it approached its maturity when the desire to find or pass on its identity as a nation, in relation to other nations, was growing tougher. Its maturity increases further, as it becomes increasingly felt that knowledge of the patterns and patterns of socio-political-economic relations will make it possible for people to understand and realize the forces that govern society. (Abdullah, 1978: 9)

Indonesia's natural wealth and culture are obviously extraordinary, especially if we describe the cultural richness of regional songs and many other works of art, no country matches as Indonesia. Indonesia's natural wealth has attracted other nations and made this nation once colonized by the Dutch, by the Japanese and now it seems that this country remains colonized in many fields, without being able to raise the head as a nation of wealth. Such long colonization makes the Indonesian nation does not have a fighting spirit to compete with other nations, even with neighboring countries such as Malaysia. Why is that? In addition to being still unable to get out of the mental of the colonized people, also because of the omission not to put the wealth of nature and cultural richness as the capital
of state resilience. Society seems to be left to not know that cultural wealth is the power to be able to sustain the economy. (Taufik, 2011:18)

More than national history, local history, depending on the borders of its geographical spaces, will confront us more directly and intimately. Not only the great figures of great events are encountered, but ordinary people who struggle with human or natural problems. We are dealing with people who are struggling to overcome all kinds of obstacles that surround themselves. How s/he (in the general sense) governs his society and gives an ideal picture of the rule. How they efforts overcome reality to pursue the ideal dream that s/he has made. That is why local history must have autonomy. Because with this autonomy can be expected to provide something of value, whether for national history or more idealitis again to deepen the notion of "self" and other human beings. (Abdullah, 1978: 24)

From the Indonesian islands, Bali is the most profitable for the development of Indonesian dances. The reason for the unique development of dancing in Bali lies in the fact that dancing plays a very important role in the religious and social life of Bali. Dancing is a very important aspect of the Hindu-Balinese (Hindu-Dharma) religion. (Soedarsono, 1974:134)

Bali is known as the first gateway of Indonesian tourism world, full of fascinating religious dance and customs. For example, Pendet and Gabor dance, which functioned as a dance offering for the Gods, with graceful movements, but sometimes very agile can create a sense of pleasure for the audience. Dance Line which originally is a traditional dance for the ceremony of death, with the steps that fast, sturdy and manly can give the impression heroik that fun. But it is clear that Pendet dance, Gabor and Baris originally worked on the basis of will or belief as a means for religious ceremonies and Custom. (Djamaludin, tt:19)

Western writers and tourists say that Bali has a simple life where the system seems to be mutually helpful and for this reason the island of Bali has been called "paradise on the earth". These qualities help each other in the typical characteristics of Indonesian society in general and especially with the evidence on the island of Bali. Covarrubias (1937: 206)

"Art of Dance" as an aesthetic human expression, its presence is not independent. Technically speaking, dance can be understood from forms and techniques related to its composition (shape analysis or choreographic arrangement) or its dancer techniques (analysis of how to perform or skill). While viewed in contextual terms related to sociology and anthropology, dance is an immanent and integral part of the socio-cultural dynamics of society. The obvious explanation for the "art of dance" in this discourse, both dance derived from primitive culture, traditional dance that develops in the palace (commonly called "classic"), dance that lives among rural people with "populist" traits, as well as growing dance In urban communities (often "pop" letters), and "modern" dance or "new creations", its presence will not be separated from the support community. The existence of dance art with its environment, really is a quite interesting social problem. (Hadi, 2005: 13)

During the Primitive Society (up to 400 AD) dances in Bali were similar to those in other regions of Indonesia. In this period Balinese dances were full of
magic and sacred natural and they were definitely democratic society. In the Period of feudal Society (400 A.D - 1945) the development of dancing in Bali had been different from that in other regions of Indonesia. At the beginning of the Feodal Society Period, when elements of Hinduism in Balinese culture was still very strong. Mutual help and democracy have been maintained especially in their
cultural life, including dancing. It is true that in Bali, during the Feodal Society Period, the palace of kings is a center of cultural development but cultural activities, especially dancing, also occur outside the palace walls, as both palaces and ordinary people need dancing as part of their religious ceremonies. Dance of development in the palace and they thrive among ordinary people. In the Feodal Period Society there was also a dance performed purely for entertainment. (Soedarsono, 1974:140).

When considering the institutionalization of dance in the palace society, then our picture tends that the institutionalization has a high aesthetic value or Javanese term is often called adi lubung art. The art of palace dance with patronage of the king is able to realize the polished and finished values (fitnesse), so we can call it "classical dance". The word "classic" or "classici" is derived from the West from the Latin word classici. This word was originally used by a medieval Roman literary writer named Aulus Gellius to give the title of good literary works from Roman authors. Gellius gave the title to the thought of Servius Tullius when classifying Roman society based on his wealth into six classes. The division of the class, the highest class is called classici, and the lowest class gets the predicate of the proletarian class. Based on that understanding then comes the term scriptor classicus or author of high quality used Gellius, to distinguish the authors of less qualified or low so-called scriptor proletarius. (Hadi, 2005: 62)

While in Indonesia in Feodal era, which in Indonesia has marked by the emergence of the Hindu kingdom in about 400 AD. From that time in Indonesia there were two groups of people, namely the nobility and the king as the rich and powerful, and the common people as the poor. While dance was the art closest to all aspects of human life and dance was the easiest artistic expression, but it can also be the most difficult, so dance was not only developed among royalty and nobility, but also developed among the commoners. Of course, the results of the art of palace dance are very different from the results of the ordinary people. The results of the ordinary people still remain simple and much based on the traditional art heritage, while the sowing in the palace of the king and nobility leads to a ripe cooking in all artistic terms. This is so because the art of dance that develops in the palace gets the shade of kings and nobles to be patron of palace art. It's just that in the development of court dance art in the Feodal era became a monopoly of kings and nobles. (Djamaludin, tt:30)

Dance as a result of a culture full of meaning and value, can be called as a symbol system. The symbol system is something created by man and is conventionally used together, organized and thoroughly studied, thus giving the notion of the "human" essence, a framework which is full of the meaning of orienting itself to the other; To its environment and to itself, as well as its products and its reliance on social interaction. (Hadi, 2005: 23)
Curt Sachs a music historian and dance history from Germany who later settled in the United States, in his book World History of the Dance argued, that the development of dance as a high art has existed in prehistoric times. In culture, dance has reached a level of perfection that has not been achieved by art or other science. As a music expert, Curt Sachs also suggested, that in prehistoric times if music was separated from dance, the music had no artistic value whatsoever. (Djamaludin, tt:16)

Dance is seen as a symbolic system that is a mental representation of the subject and the vehicle of human conception about a message to be impregnated. The typical form of the symbol, when dance as an art creations, according to the term Langer can be categorized as a form or living form. Dance as a human expression or subjectivity of artists is a significant symbol system (significant symbols), meaning to mean and simultaneously invite various reactions. The symbol system is not silent or silent, but speaks to others. (Hadi, 2005: 23)

The first evidence of Indian influence in Indonesia is the rise of the early Hindu-Indonesian kingdom, such as Kutai Raya in East Kalimantan (around 400 A.D) and Tarumanegara kingdom in West Java (around 400 A.D). India's influence spreads in Indonesia and were mostly on the island of Bali. Indigenous cultures of the Balinese were combined in such a way with Hindu-Javanese (Hindu-Buddhist) culture that a unique society was formed that has remained unchanged for centuries. When the island of Java and other parts of Indonesia experienced a conversion process to Islam, Bali Island had maintained the Hindu-Balinese museum from the Hindu-Javanese period. Many products from Old Javanese literature from the Majapahit period have been found in Bali, written on the leaves of Lontar coconut. (Soedarsono, 1974:135).

The view of the symbol system above refers more to the "concept", not to the artifact or the object. The presence of dance as a whole is not a construction that can be deciphered its elements, but a unified and unity (gestalt). Therefore, when borrowing the term Langer, it is included in presentational symbols and not a discursive symbol. Presentational symbols refer to hidden meanings, requiring interpretation, that is to reveal the hidden meaning behind the immediate meaning, or to express the level of meaning presupposed in which it is literal. (Hadi, 2005: 23)

The original Balinese dance before the period of Hindu-Javanese influence was magical and sacred in nature but gradually adapted to the Hindu-Dharma religion. Apart from the type of dance there are also many other dances that are performed purely for entertainment. (Soedarsono, 1974:138)

"Dance" as a symbolic process of human action within the society, its existence becomes an institutional system. The institutionalization of dance as a system of production and distribution of symbols, involves two aspects as well. First, the system of physical-material forms, in the form of a container of institutions or organizations, namely who seeks, how to control, manage, maintain and so forth. Both are value systems, norms (pranata) of the resulting "dance" symbolic process. These two aspects of institutionalization are an inseparable unity; That is, one aspect always points to the other. (Hadi, 2005: 46)
If the expression of motion dance is much influenced by the sense, then the result is a classical dance whose goal is more directed to the art of spectacle (performing art). In the classical dance seems once the basic pattern is steady, so as if there are regulations that bind. Due to the existence of these binding rules, it appears that the expression of classical dance movements is largely governed by reason. In classical dance the size of beauty lies not only in the ability of the expression of motion to satisfy the feelings of the audience, but also determined by whether or not the dance is delivered on the basis of a predetermined pattern. (Djamaludin, tt:19)

However, dance as a symbol system can also be understood as a tagging system. That is, the presence of dance can not be separated from several aspects that can be seen in detail, among others: motion, accompaniment, place, floor pattern, time, clothing, dressing and property. The system of signifying this semiotic view in it contains literal, primary and direct meaning shown by agreement or convention formed jointly by the society or culture in which the symbol or mark applies. Therefore the relationship between signified / signifie and signifier is more arbitrator. For example, in the form of a particular dance, the motion marker walking with a curved floor pattern is a sign of "sadness"; But with the same marker in other forms of dance, is not necessarily a sign of "sadness". Here the link between penenda and marker needs to be explained in accordance with the mutual agreement. (Hadi, 2005: 23-4)

Like the Javanese dances Balinese dances have also undergone a process of modernization since independence. In Balinese dancing there has been a tendency to secularize the dance used to become the exclusive sacred dance, to simplify traditional, sacred and secular compositions and create new compositions. In short, all Balinese dances can be enjoyed by everyone regardless of their function in the religious life of the Balinese people. (Soedarsono, 1974:184)

Balinese dancing can be divided into two styles, North Bali style and South Bali style. For the Balinese themselves, the difference is striking, the North Bali style becomes stronger and the South Bali style is more refined. In the style of North Bali, for example, a female dancer lifts her legs a bit high. The Kebyar is a dance that is danced by women in North Bali, while in Southern Bali danced by men. The difference between the two styles is not fundamental, however and the two forces affect each other. Now all Baliness dances are both, from North Bali or South Bali, which is called by a Balinese term dance or Balinese style. (Soedarsono, 1974:140-1)

In the beginning Legong dance was a feudal art of the triwangsas in Bali. Legong in inspiration and creation equal to Gambuh, which was an art from the palace. This art had evolved according to the pattern of nobility and received encouragement from the kings of old. The royal officers check into villages to get talented girls to train and become Legong dancers. The process of the occurrence of Legong dance became concept in the performing arts that are able to create, especially artists, taking elements of populistity that developed into high-quality art. (http://kebudayaanindonesia.net/kebudayaan/893/tari-legong)
Initially this dance was sacred which staged at the temple to accompany the ceremonies of Hinduism. The dancer must perform taksu before staging and wear a mask. However, gradually this dance has increasingly showing no progress. In 1928, the King allowed this dance to be performed outside the castle to be enjoyed by the people. In addition, due to attacks by the Dutch in the early 19th century CE, this dance did not develop in the palace. However, in 1931 this dance became a tourist commodity worthy marketed in the tourism sector. Many hotels in Bali are staging this dance for just entertainment tourists visiting Bali.

The sacred dances are those associated with the Hindu-Dharma religion. We can say that all Balinese dances are religious, because even those who are secular have anything to do with the religious life of Balinese people. Based on its function, content and meaning, however, there are several Balinese dances that can be grouped in secular dances. (Soedarsono, 1974:144). Sacred or sacral dance can be subdivided into various groups such as temple dance, ritual dance, Sanghyang dance and Barong dance. (Soedarsono, 1974:174-75)

Legong Dance is also included in Kebyar gong. Conversely it can be said that Legong is a special characteristic of kebyar gong. In southern Bali it is also called Oleg. Even Legong is danced by two female dancers, but one dancer is often added, referred to as "tjondong" (helper), who emerges from behind the curtain, and after presenting two fans to both legong-dancers, s/he disappears again behind the curtain (Early story of King Lasem and Daha). The Legong-dancers in South Bali never wear top-clothes while in North Bali usually wear them (but some of them do not wear top-clothes either)

Legong Dance is the most intimate dance for people outside Bali. The Legong, this is actually a common term in Bali refers to a female dance. As the dance has been developed, however, the term Legong is used primarily to show a dance drama whose background is a Balinese legend. There are other Balinese dances that belong to Legong dance, such as Butterfly Tarum, the Herons and Jogbog dance. The Tarum butterflies depict male and female butterflies fluttering in the open air. The heron dance explains the storks flying around in the sky, and the Jogbog dance depicts monkeys playing with each other in the woods. Now these three dances are no longer called Legong dances but use their own names as mentioned above, and the proper Legong Dance is a female dance based on Balinese legend about the king of Lasem and its Rangkesari. (Soedarsono, 1974:180-1)

Legong Dance is a classical Balinese dance that has a very complex vocabulary that is bound by the structure of percussion tabuh which supposedly is the influence of Gambuh. Sometimes this dance is danced by 2 (two) girls or more where usually one of them there acts as a condong, the role that first appeared in the stage to start this Legong dance. There is also a Legong dance performed by one or two pairs of dancers without displaying the character Condong. Among the features of Legong is the fan which usage by the dancers (except the Condong). The dancers do not use verbal dialogue, and the presentation of episodic or not very narrative plays. (http://kebudayaan.kemdikbud.go.id/bpnbbali/2015/04/15/tari-legong-keraton)
Legong Dance used to be a real dance-drama (dance-pantomime) performed by a complete number of dancers, all girls, playing characters. In addition to the gamelan (gamelan palegongan) sat tandak (narrator) who tells the story; It is a dance drama without dialogue. The characters of dancing are the king of Lasem, Rangkesari, Condong, servants, stranger, a man-servant taking the side of Lasem king, the crow, which is the symbol of death, and the king of Daha. Currently, however, Legong Dance is only danced by three out of four girls, who play Condong, Lasem king, Rangkesari and crows. The first dancer is Condong, then follows a love dance between Lasem king and Rangkesari. The last one is a fight between Lasem king and the crow, the symbol of death. (Soedarsono, 1974:181-2)

Traditional dance can still be divided again based on the artistic value into three, namely simple dance, folk dance and classical dance which is usually also referred to as dance palace. (Djamaludin, tt:29)

Distinguishing Balinese dances that have modernization, we can divide them into two groups:

(1) Traditional dance-composition that has been simplified and shortened accordingly

With the tastes of modern society in Indonesia in general and Bali on especially.

(2) New dance creations that still use traditional dance elements.

The first group of dance compositions can be considered Balinese classical dances, and the second group as modern Balinese dances. For this group belongs to traditional dances, either sacred or secular, which has been given new essence and spirit in accordance with the essence and spirit of modern Indonesia. This classical composition is a traditional dance, shortened and simplified. Among the classical Balinese dances still cultivated are Pendet, the Drama-Dance Drama, the dance-drama Mask, the Arja dance-opera, the Baris dance, the Jauk dance, the Kecak dance, the Janger dance, the Legong dance, the dance keybar and the Prembon dance-drama. (Soedarsono, 1974:185-6)

According to Babad Dalem Sukawati, an ancient village of Sukawati, Gianyar, Legong dance was created based on the dream of I Dewa Agung Made Karna, king of Sukawati who reigned in 1775-1825 M. I Dewa Agung Made was doing tapa at Jogan Agung Ketewel temple near Sukawati village. In it he dreamed of seeing an angel dancing in Heaven. They danced in beautiful clothes and wore golden headdresses. When conscious of his dream, I Dewa Agung Made ordered Bendesa Ketewel (village chief) to make some masks and create a dance similar to his dreams. Shortly afterwards, Bendesa Ketewel managed to make nine pieces of mask performed by two dancers Sang Hyang and who are now already using choreography that must have been allegedly created at the time. (http://kebudayaanindonesia.net/kebudayaan/893/tari-legong )

The story is based on an episode of Malat, Bali Thousand and One Nights, where Princess Rangkesari was kidnapped by the arrogant King Lasem. (Covarrubias, 1937:227). Some time after the creation of Sang Hyang Legong, an art group led by I Gusti Jelantik and Blahbatuh performed Nandir dance whose style
was almost the same as Sang Hyang Legong dance, except for two male dancers who do not wear masks. I Dewa Agung Manggis immediately ordered two artists from Sukawati to organize Nadir dance to be performed by girls. Since then Classical Legong dance was created until now. (http://kebudayaanindonesia.net/kebudayaan/893/tari-legong)

Closing

Seeing the dance performance Nadir King I Dewa Agung Made Karna ordered the artists to repack the dance to be played by the female dancers. After the artists of the messenger I Dewa Agung Made Because successfully repacked the dance Nadir Legong Keraton dance history begins and can be exhibited by the more graceful female dancers in bring it.

This dance is a rhythmic body art that comes from Gianyar Bali. The historians who argue that the legong palace dance comes from Gianyar Bali area that is those who rely on a Babad named Dalem Sukawati. From Babad it is known that in the 17th century range of King Sukawati named Dewa Agung Made Karna as mentioned above, sent to one of the customary elders/Bendese Ketewel to create a dance with face mask or mask property. This is done by the King because he dreamed to see the angels who were dancing. After the mask as the main property of the next dance Bendese Ketewel creates a dance movement which is then called the Sang Hyang Legong dance. From these sources then the historians and artists concluded that the legong palace dance came from Gianyar Bali. (http://www.senitari.com/2015/08/sejarah-tari-legong-keraton-dan-asal-daerahnya.html)

The standard dance is performed by two Legong and a skewer. Condong performed first, then followed two Legong dancing Legong lasem. The repertoire with three dancers is known as Legong Kraton. This dance takes the basis of a ceretic branch.

After the creation of Sang Hyang Legong dance which is believed to realize the dream of King I Dewa Agung Made Karna. In the next period there is an artist named Gusti Jelantik staged a dance named Nadir in the palace pendopo. From the motion and style of the dancer dance that is played by the men in the eyeball looks like Sang Hyang Legong dance.

In 1928, the King allowed this dance to be performed outside the castle to be enjoyed by the people. However, due to attacks by the Dutch in the early 19th century AD, this dance did not develop in the palace. In 1931 this dance was transformed into a worthy tourist commodity marketed in the tourism sector. Many hotels in Bali are staging this dance for just entertainment tourists visiting Bali. The uniqueness in the motion and style of legong bali dance make many artists who are enthusiastic in preserving one of the arts of this ancestral heritage. Until now many artists in Bali teach and provide training for the next generation to preserve the existence of legong palace dance. As an entertainment dance the legong dance court is very quickly recognized by the kings of other kingdoms in Bali region. No wonder if in the next century of the 19th century this dance became one of the typical entertainment of almost the entire palace in all areas of Bali.
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