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Barong ket Dance in Ubud Bali: The Enculturation Process for the Implicated Young Generation to the Existence of Traditional Dance

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Abstrack

Adat Ubud Village as one of the villages in Ubud District, Gianyar Regency, Bali Province, historically it has been known as the center of natural and cultural tourism in Bali. Particularly in the development of cultural tourism, it has become a source of the village income as well as between generations in community members. The cultural tourism in this matter is in the form of barong ket dance performances that are performed in various characters and staged at various stages spread across the area of Ubud. This study aims to examine the problem of how the process of cultivating the barong ket dance to the younger generation in preserving and developing traditional arts so that it becomes a source of income that has economic value. The strategy used in analyzing and examining this research problem uses an enculturation approach. The research results show that; 1) The enculturation of the Barong ket dance that has developed in Ubud was carried out by inheriting a dance style that has been created by its elders. 2) style that has been inherited then developed again through the process of enculturation to young generations. 3) the result of the consistent enculturation process could have implications for the existence of the art of barong ket dance as well as an attraction for tourists who were visiting to Ubud area.

Keywords: barong ket dance, enculturation, existence, traditional dance

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INTRODUCTION

The art of bapang barong is one of the most important elements in Balinese cultural heritage which is still fond of, maintained, and developed by the Balinese community. Dibia emphasized that in the past twenty years, the development of Balinese art had been enlivened by the barong ket dance performance particularly in the field of performing arts (Dibia, 2018)

In the current era of globalization, the relationship between culture and tourism must be built even closer, this was built by developing creative ideas so that this embodiment can be realized (Waitt and Gibson, 2014). In line with this matter, Mike Crang (2014) explains that tourism is now at the forefront of the cultural economy, which both tourism takes the process of cultural performances as an attraction, as well as economic activities work through cultural practices that its integrity and existence are maintained (Crang, 2014). Certainly, in maintaining a cultural existence, it is necessary to have real implementation through a learning or cultural process (enculturation).

The lively performance of the barong ket dance that developed in Bali island, particularly in Ubud area could not be separated from the enculturation process that was going well in the local younger generation. Enculturation can be understood as a result of the inheritance culture to future generations through a learning process that takes place informally (Triyanto, 2015). The process of enculturation of the barong ket dance could be seen clearly in the family of the late I Made Kerse. Even though I Made Kerse or who is familiarly called Pekak Kerse has died, the barong igel condong dance and the barong ket without tail (barong buntut) which are the characteristics of him were still preserved and cared for by his generation. One of his great-grandparents named I Wayan Suartawan was still able to dance the barog ket igel condong well. In addition, through the igel condong that he mastered, Suartawan often won

competitions in various bapang barong festivals in Bali.

Historically, starting from 2005 until now, it can be said that this period is the top of the barong ket dance success (Dibia, 2018). After the Barong ket dance festival was held, which was initiated by the Bangli Regional Government, it slowly but surely became the starting point for the revival of the barong ket dance. As well as the top of its success has begun to be detected from 2012 to the present, which many similar festivals were held almost every year in various regions, namely Tabanan, Badung, Denpasar, Gianyar, Bangli and Klungkung.

Spradley (1979: 3) states that children who grow up in society will study culture and discover how their parents and people around them interpret their world. In the community, children learn to differentiate many things to classify and perform different types of actions, which aim to evaluate what is good and bad, and to judge if new actions are appropriate or inappropriate (Spradley, 1979).

In line with this statement, Piaget (1896-1952) emphasizes that culture is learned through two stages, namely; 1) active learning comes from ourselves and can construct knowledge itself, this is what we often call as natural talents and, 2) the learning comes from social interaction from the process of culture (enculturation) that aims to construct knowledge (Supardan, 2016).

A study conducted by Dewi (2016) shows that Balinese culture particularly the art of Barong Ket has experienced a shift in function from what was originally religious art to profane art which was presented for the benefit of tourism (Dewi, 2016). It was emphasized by Putra's (2017) view that the change in the function of the Barong Ket dance occurred because of a form of creative adaptation from the younger generation who developed traditional arts to be a source of income for art actors (Putra, 2017). Due to the fact that culture is inherently dynamic, it is very easy to become a tourist attraction and can become an income for the supporting

communities (Hopkins and Becken, 2014). Triyanto (2015) further informs that due to the development of the times as a result of modernization, many traditional arts have changed their function to a newer civilization, certainly this is considered positive because the form of renewal comes through the learning or cultural system (enculturation) (Triyanto, 2015). Previous research that have been briefly described is a reference in further examining the enculturation of the Barong Ket dance and its implications.

So far there has not been found an in-depth study of the enculturation process that occurred in the Barong Ket dance in Ubud Bali. Based on this statement, a research to find out the enculturation process and its implications for the existence of traditional arts needs to be carried out. The enculturation applied to the younger generation in preserving traditional arts and increasing the economic level through arts and culture needs attention. Therefore, in-depth research on this matter needs to be carried out.

METHOD

This study aims to examine the process of enculturation of the traditional art of barong ket, which is the starting point for the preservation and development of traditional arts. Based on this general description, this study used an interdisciplinary approach. The researcher used a combination of various sciences in analyzing the problems listed in the problem formulation. The focus of this study is on the enculturation process and its implications.

The location chosen in this study is the community of Adat Ubud Village, Ubud District, Gianyar Regency, Bali. The subjects that became sources of information to obtain data were artists and/ or cultural observers, owners of the Neka art museum, barong practitioners and dancers, barong makers and family members of the bapang barong maestro I Made Kerse. Furthermore, the information data that had been obtained was then collected

by using observation techniques, in-depth interviews, and documentation. It was certainly in the midst of the Covid 19 pandemic like now, the use of social media platforms was highly optimized to facilitate data collection if there were sources who did not recommend to meet directly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ubud: The Community and Their Culture

Pakraman Ubud Village is one of six Pakraman Villages in Ubud sub-district. Each Pakraman village has a Pura Khayangan Tiga which is the responsibility and as a unifying its community members (village manners). Besides the Khayangan Tiga Temple, which was the main area of Pakraman village, there were also other traditional refuge temples that had been inherited from generation to generation.

In every traditional and religious activity in Ubud, art always included, namely; Balinese karawitan arts (Balinese gamelan), wali dance art, pesantian (religious holy songs), and lemah puppet that function as accompaniment to the piodalan ceremony at the temple. Indirectly, the celebration of the piodalan ceremony presented various performances of sacred arts, it could attract the interest of tourists who visited Ubud area to participate in watching the procession of the ceremony.

Ubud with the development of its tourism advancement was something that should be grateful for all levels of society. The beauty of its natural panorama, cultural arts, customs, and the religiousness of the community of Ubud made Ubud had its own charm and was visited by many tourists from various countries in the world. The atmosphere of Ubud with all of its contents was a great potential that was perfect with the integration of tradition and culture which was the strong character of the community of Ubud.

The Enculturation of Barong Ket Dance: the process of inheriting previous dance styles

Before we discuss about the enculturation process that takes place by inheriting the previous dance styles, it is important for us to briefly understand the ontology of the barong ket dance. The word barong is thought to have originated from the Sanskrit word *barwang* which means bear, it is defined as an animal with a large body. Another word that has a similarity is *binarwang* or *binarong* which means fierce (Zoetmulder, 2006).

In line with this, Jane Belo emphasizes that Barong was a mythological figure or also known as a mythological animal (Belo, 1966). This opinion was then supported by Bandem's explanation that the mythological beast *barwang* could be a protector of society and ward off all harm (Bandem, 1983). Physically, there were two parts that built up the barong, namely the mask (*punggalan* or *tapel*) and the body (*awak* or *raga*). When these two parts were combined, the whole barong ket would formed.

Balinese people are known to be fanatical about traditional arts (Covarrubias, 1974), especially regarding the dancing style of each dancer (the *bapang* leader). Dibia concluded that the performance of the *bapang* Barong dance from the 1970s to the present, shows that there are different styles among dancers (Dibia, 2018). The appearance of the barong dance maestros namely; I Made Kerse, I Ketut Renteg, I Ketut Kembur and I Made Gina had shown in the past four different styles. In fact, the style of the *bapang* Barong I Made Kerse still exists today because it is inherited by his descendants.

I Made Kerse is a Barong ket dance maestro from Buruan Village, Gianyar. Pekak Kerse is his nickname, he was born in 1923 and died in 2002. The unique dance that was also become as an identity of Pekak Kerse namely *igel condong*. His greatness in dancing *igel condong* could be seen in a very good combination of the *condong* dance which had a gentle valley character (sweet) and *igel bapang omang* which had a strong character

(authoritative). Pekak Kerse is a Barong dancer who has extensive experience. In 1969, after his returned from West Germany, Pekak Kerse was included in the Bali Ramayana Ballet contingent to the National Ramayana Festival in Prambanan.



Figure 1. Pekak Kerse when practiced the Barong ket dance. (Document: Suartawan, 2000)

According to the statement of his great-grandfather, I Wayan Suartawan, who met at his residence, explained that besides *igel condong* and *bapang omang*, Pekak Kerse was also able to adopt various animal movements into the barong performance he danced.

“What makes people interested in my barong kumpi (great-grandparent) dance was that he could perfectly adopt fauna movements namely; cat, lion, and tiger into the barong dance movements that they danced. So, the Barong dance movements performed by kumpi were not standard, in addition the name of the movement was adopted from animals, namely; the movement of *godel garang muring* (a cow seized by a fly), *lelasan ngalih ikut* (the lizard that looking for a tail). The point of the movement was a combination of fauna movements that he saw in the wild which were then transformed into a barong movement that is used for pulling *kumpi*,” explained Suartawan.

The natural talent that arose from the experience of when saw his great-grandfather dance had led Suartawan to become proficient in dancing the barong ket. According to Von Glaserfeld, the founder of the constructivism

movement, states that knowledge, no matter how knowledge is defined, is formed in the mind of every individual and a thinking subject has no alternative unless to construct what he knows based on his own experience. All of our thoughts are based on our own experiences, therefore they are subjective (Glaserfeld, 1987)

Furthermore, Piaget argues that through active learners, individuals can construct their own knowledge (Piaget, 1971). From the explanations of these two experts, we can know that the knowledge owned by I Wayan Suartawan in dancing the barong is the result of his active observation of what his great-grandfather had done. Then, it was transmitted to a consistent training process, so that it had implications for Barong ket dance movements that were increasingly innovative but still in the same standard as its predecessor.

The Enculturation to the younger generation: a style redeveloped

A junior high school student named I Wayan Bayu Wijaya was a young barong dancer. Bayu has been learnt the barong dance for past two years, he was interested in the art of barong dance starting from watching the teacher, I Wayan Suartawan who danced at Pura Dalem Buruan, Gianyar. The intensive social interaction with the art of bapang barong was obtained by Bayu from the community who were really fond of the barong ket dance. Based on this fact, Bayu, who was currently 14 years old, had a desire to deepen the barong ket dance

Piaget (1896-1980) in (Supardan, 2016) states that the social interactions that individuals go through are very important for the construction of their knowledge. So, we know that Bayu's interest in dancing the barong through a process of interaction had generated interest in learning more about the dance and had led to the process of deepening the barong dance to become a professional barong dancer like his predecessor.

In accordance with the observations of researchers related to the learning process applied by Suartawan to Bayu, it was carried

out by giving Bayu various basic questions related to the barong dance, then continued with the introduction of the material to be given through the lecture method, then for the final stage, namely applying the material through direct practice methods.

In the perspective of Constructivism, the learning process carried out by Su journalist with his students is called the "Learning Cycle", the stages were divided into three, namely; (1) discovery. In this stage, students were encouraged to make open-ended questions and hypotheses; (2) Concept Introduction; in this stage, the teacher asked the concepts related to that topic; (3) Concept Application; by applying the concepts presented in stage one and stage two.

The discovery process was reflected in the basic questions that Suartawan asked to Bayu, namely; *"adi mekita meuruk ngigelan barong? (why are you interested in dancing barong?), menurut yu barong to singa apa macan apa lembu?"* (Do you think that barong is the embodiment of a lion, tiger, or ox?) After the initial introduction that was asked through such questions, then Suartawan emphasized that *"harus nawang malu beburon apa to i barong tur bisa noli gerakanne, mare je lant as ke gerakan barong ane sebenehne mare jenyak to"* (you have to understand the animal figures first what is contained in the barong, after you understand then you can dance it well), it was explained Suartawan.



Figure 2. Suartawan when asked questions related to Barong dance to Bayu. (Document: Yogi, 2021)

The process of introducing the concept that was applied by Suartawan to his students, namely reintroducing many barong dance movements that he had inherited from his great-grandfather, I Made Kerse, namely; *igel condong*, *godel garang muring*, *sledet capung*, and *lipi megat yeh* movements. Because according to him, if these movement could be mastered perfectly, it will give more value to the dance that was performed. On the one hand, it could also maintain and preserve movements that had been inherited by the previous *juru bapang*.



Figure 3. Suartawan in introducing the Barong dance to Bayu. (Document: Yogi, 2021)

The process of applying the concepts by Suartawan to his students is by practicing the barong dance with a count first, then when it was deemed capable, then proceed to practice the barong dance with accompanying music. Bayu followed every movement that was emulated by Suartawan. Sometimes Suartawan also corrected if there was a movement that was not quite right by Bayu. This activity was repeated until questions arose from Bayu regarding the movements which he still found difficult to do, he had not even found the right technique to perform the movements.



Figure 4. Suartawan in the application of the Barong dance to Bayu. (Document: Yogi, 2021)

Based on the flow of the learning process that Suartawan applied to their students, it can be seen that the skill of Barong dancing was the result of a traditional legacy through an enculturation process in his family environment that was inherited by his great-grandfather, the *bapang barong* maestro I Made Kerse, who later passed down to her student, Bayu.

When observed from the perspective of Nativism put forward by Schopenhauer, in his opinion that human development is determined by potential from birth and the environment cannot change it (Nadirah, 2016). This opinion was later refuted by the flow of empiricism put forward by John Locke, who explains that humans are greatly influenced and determined by the natural environment around them (Purwanto, 2013). However, both of them can be combined in the flow of convergence proposed by William Stern, who argues that the nature and environment of them greatly determine by human development (Stern, 1924).

With the three theoretical formulations above, the enculturation process that occurred in Suartawan led to the flow of convergence where his ability to dance barong ket came from the collaboration between his natural talents and the environment that formed him as a Barong Ket dancer.

In this matter, Suartawan as a descendant of the *Bapang Barong* artist was considered as having succeeded in maintaining what his previous parents had inherited because

he was able to dance Barong well, this is evidenced by the many achievements from winning the Barong Ket dance competition/festival in Bali, and even he was able to develop and share the knowledge he had to the younger generation in their environment.

Implications of the Enculturation Process of Barong ket dance

Barong ket that has occurred in Bali recently is a cultural phenomenon that has broad implications for the life of Balinese community in general and especially for the community of Ubud. Especially among young people, the sense of love and pride in their culture has begun to be implemented in the very lively bapang barong ket competition/ festival. The reason why barong ket dance as a competition category always has very good appreciation because barong ket dance is a tradition art that is able to adapt to social situations that are developing in the current era of globalization (Pratama, 2020).

The competition is currently very lively held by various groups, studios, communities, and others that are widespread in the Bali island. Especially in Ubud, the barong dance competition is more focused on developing the talents of young barong dancers. SMA Negeri 1 Ubud, for example which often held bapang barong competitions. It is also hoped that this kind of bapang barong competition will be able to; (1) reduce the activities of students or young people in general in their love for all modern things, namely Kpop dance, Tiktok dance, Hiphop, R&B, and so on. Without realizing it, the conditions like this will make traditional dance extinct. (2) through the competition, it will be able to preserve its culture and at the same time introduce it to the wider community about traditional dances that are full of philosophical content that can be used to educate the character of the nation's children. (3) The existence of traditional dance competitions can increase the love of the motherland to the younger generation in general to always protect the very valuable inheritance of the previous

ancestors. (4) The existence of competitions can also have a positive impact on the development of cultural tourism in an area. For example in Ubud, the existence of traditional art competition, domestic and foreign tourists visiting the Ubud area will indirectly watch the competition.

The large number of tourists visiting the Ubud area, both local and foreign tourists, proves that there is a creative and innovative process carried out by the local community in performing traditional art into art that has high value. Creativity and innovation will not just emerge without an enculturation process that lasts from generation to generation (Sugiarto, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The barong ket dance art is one of the most important parts of Bali's cultural heritage. The enculturation strategy that occurred in the family of barong ket dance maestro, I Made Kerse was very well done by means of; (1) inheriting the style of igel condong, igel godel garang muring, igel sledet capung, igel lipi megat yeh, and so to the three generations below (great-grandfather); (2) Likewise with the great-grandfather, I Wayan Suartawan, who was willing and serious in learning the barong ket dance which was inherited by his previous parents until he won various barong ket dance competitions/ festivals; (3) Carrying great responsibility as the regeneration of a maestro, Suartawan was also able to transmit his ability to dance to his students through the learning stages, namely discovery, concept introduction, and concepts application, by applying these three concepts it is hoped that his students can learn the barong ket dance more easily. If the enculturation strategy continues between generations, it is certainly that arts that contain tradition will not extinct.

The implication of the enculturation process that takes place in the Ubud community can be seen from the "Barong ket dance interest" which was reflected in the enthusiasm of the community in participating

the barong ket dance competition/ festival competition especially young people. Then the second is the rapid growth of tourism in Ubud, especially cultural tourism that came from creative and innovative communities in maintaining and developing traditional arts that could attract tourists to watch each performance.

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