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THE FUNCTION OF THE BEDHAYA LARUNG DANCE IN THE PROHIBITION OF TELAGA NGEHEL TELAGA PONOROGO REGENCY

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Abstract: The research entitled the function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance by Shodiq in the Larungan Sesaji Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency aims to dissect the problem of how the Bedhaya Larung Dance functions which was created in 2006 by Shodiq Pristiwanto. The formulation of the problem in this study is how the Bedhaya Larung Dance functions. Using descriptive qualitative and data techniques used are observation, interviews and documentation. The data collected by researchers can be trusted in terms of language and validity, so the triangulation used in this study is source triangulation and time triangulation. analyzed using Soedarsono's theory which divides two, namely primary functions and secondary functions. it can be found that the function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance is dance as a means of ceremony, educational means, entertainment means and social means.

Keywords: function, bedhaya larung

1. INTRODUCTION

The Larung Sesaji ceremony is a traditional ancestral tradition held every 1st of Suro, coinciding with the Islamic New Year, 1st of Muharram. This tradition stems from the belief of the people around Lake Ngebel in the importance of maintaining harmony and balance in the relationship between humans and nature. This tradition was first initiated in 1993, reflecting the lake's reputation for being haunted or "wingit" (spirited). The ceremony is intended as a form of respect for ancestors, an expression of gratitude, and a request for protection from God Almighty through the symbols of prayer in the offerings. The Larung Sesaji procession is now mandatory every 1st of Suro as an annual event. This ritual has developed into a religious tourism attraction.

The Larung Sesaji ceremony consists of two main parts. The first part takes place the evening before 1st Suro. Before the procession begins, organizers prepare all the necessary ingredients for the Larung Sesaji, such as the slaughter of a Kendhit goat, a black goat with white stripes across its body. This goat is believed to bring peace and tranquility. The feet and head are set aside specifically for the four feet, along with the blood and cok (a kind of incense) to be buried in the four corners of Lake Ngebel. The second part is a series of ritual activities carried out the morning after the first part of the procession. The offerings floated in this procession are symbolized by making a large tumpeng (cone-shaped



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rice cone). These include the buceng agung (grand rice cone) and buceng purak (purak rice cone), which are then paraded around the lake. The buceng agung (grand rice cone) is arranged in four levels: the base, the bottom, the top, and the top of the buceng, which is decorated with sosog (a kind of incense). This buceng is topped with a large tray decorated with various vegetables, including mustard greens, carrots, and bananas. The bottom of the puceng is decorated with ingkung (green chili), tomatoes, carrots, andong leaves, and mayang (a kind of incense). The buceng is topped with long beans, carrots, mustard greens, and andong leaves. The top of the buceng, with sosog (a kind of incense), is used to place red chilies and decorative flowers. At the corners of the jodhang, young coconut leaves are placed, topped with pineapples and banyan leaves. The Larungan of Lake Ngebel begins with the Bedhaya Larung dance.

The Bedhaya Larung Dance was created by Shodiq Pristiwanto in 2006. The creation of the Bedhaya Larung dance was motivated by Shodiq's concern for the appearance of new creative dances from outside Ponorogo. The name "Bedhaya Larung" was chosen because the dance was inspired by the ritual of offering larung which is a ritual activity. This dance reminds of the relationship between humans and God which reflects the belief that everything that happens is the will of the Creator. The aspect that underlies the research of the Bedhaya Larung Dance to be studied lies in the meaning of the movement, the meaning of the Bedhaya Larung dance movement is a modification of the development of East Javanese style dance movements, especially Ponorogo with elements of Surakarta style dance movements according to needs. The difference between the Bedhaya Larung Dance and the existing Bedhaya is in the maju beksan section. After the Bedhaya Larung Dance is finished, the buceng agung and buceng purak are then carried to the middle of the lake using a boat to be floated as a sign of gratitude from the local community for blessings in the hope of being kept away from disaster. The Bedhaya Larung Dance is a new work created as a means of ritual procession Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel, so Bedhaya Larung is only danced during the larungan procession. The presence of this dance is expected to strengthen the cultural identity of the community and become one of the cultural tourism potentials that are being developed in Ngebel District. After two modifications, the Bedhaya Larung Dance has become easier to understand and learn by the community. Remembering that this tradition grew and developed in the community, Shodiq wanted to introduce Larung Sesaji through dance performances with the aim of larungan as a ritual that is carried out annually at Telaga Ngebel can be maintained. This dance is a complement to Larung Sesaji at Telaga Ngebel.

2. METHOD

This research is a field study that falls under the descriptive qualitative research category. According to Sugiyono (2008:1), qualitative research is a research method used to examine natural object conditions (as

opposed to experiments). According to Sugiyono (2019:2), observation is a scientific way to obtain data for specific purposes and uses. Research methods relate to the procedures, techniques, tools, and research design used. Research must be compatible with the chosen research approach. The research method used in this study is a qualitative method. (Sugiyono 2016:317) interviews are a data collection technique for identifying research problems. He also states that interviews are used as a data collection technique if researchers want to conduct preliminary studies to identify research problems and if researchers want to learn more about respondents.

There are two sources of data collected: primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources are data obtained directly from sources and provided to data collectors or researchers. These include interviews with research subjects or direct observation. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are data sources that do not directly provide data to data collectors, for example through other people or existing documents. Researchers obtain data through intermediaries or documents, not directly from the research object. Therefore, this study, entitled "The Function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance in the Larungan Sesaji of Telaga Ngebel, Ponorogo Regency," is sourced from field notes, as well as recordings and also data obtained through photo or video archives located at Telaga Ngebel.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The ritual function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance for the local community is profound and multidimensional, reflecting the layers of beliefs deeply rooted in their socio-cultural life. This is in line with Soedarono's theory that functions are divided into two, namely primary and secondary functions. For the community involved, this dance is not merely entertainment or physical exercise, but rather an instrument of communication between humans and the spiritual world. The Bedhaya Larung Dance is presented as a manifestation of gratitude as well as a request for safety to the Creator and respect for ancestors. These gentle yet meaningful movements are seen as a bridge that harmonizes natural energy with the social life of local residents. Based on this cultural connection, there are several main perspectives from the Telaga Ngebel community regarding the Bedhaya Larung Dance.

3.1.1 Primary Function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance

The Bedhaya Larung dance acts as an integral part of the community's living space and environment. Participation in this dance is part of the *sekedah* (or *larungan*) ceremony held annually on the 1st of Muharram at Lake Ngebel in Ponorogo Regency. It also serves as a manifestation of warding off evil. Through this sacred dance, the community offers prayers of gratitude for the abundance of God Almighty, seeking continued blessings in the future.

3.1.1.1 Bedhaya Larung Dance as a Ceremonial Instrument

The Larung Sesaji ceremony is an annual tradition held every 1 Suro (Suro Day), coinciding with the celebration of the Islamic New Year, or 1 Muharram, in the Islamic calendar. This solemn ceremony takes place in the Ngebel District, where residents float offerings of food, flowers, and symbolic objects into bodies of water, such as reservoirs or rivers, as a form of offering to nature and their ancestors. The primary purpose is to pray for the safety of the community, maintain social order, and maintain a harmonious balance between nature and humans amidst increasingly complex environmental challenges. Through this ritual, the people of Telaga Ngebel not only strengthen Javanese cultural ties but also convey a deep respect for the natural cycle and enduring spiritual values.

In the community's view, this dance, as a ceremonial instrument, holds a sacred place, as it is considered a medium of communication between humans and powers beyond themselves. The community views the dance not merely as a visual aesthetic, but as a visualized form of prayer to invoke the presence of ancestral spirits, supernatural entities, or an expression of gratitude to God. This dance, part of the Larung Sesaji ceremony, is believed to possess magical powers that maintain the balance of nature, ward off disaster, and ensure a successful harvest. Therefore, every movement, costume, and accompanying music must conform to traditional principles. Performing the Bedhaya Larung Dance not only preserves culture but also represents a definite spiritual obligation to ensure the safety and harmony of the local community.

According to Mujiono, the head of the Larung Sesaji ceremony organizers, this tradition has been passed down through generations and is a legacy from our ancestors, worthy of preservation and implementation. Shodiq Pristiwanto created a dance whose meaning and purpose align with the Larung Sesaji ceremony. Therefore, the creation of the Bedhaya Larung dance influences the goals achieved by the Ngebel District community during the Larung Sesaji ceremony. Art that thrives and thrives within a community if it serves a purpose that aligns with the community's needs will receive support and a positive response from its supporters. Just like the Bedhaya Larung dance, it not only plays a role in satisfying aesthetic needs, but also becomes an important instrument for the community to maintain customs, while also providing a visual attraction that makes the Larung Sesaji ceremony more lively and meaningful.

3.1.1.2 Bedhaya Larung Dance as a Spectacle

The Bedhaya Larung Dance performance exudes a sense of beauty that can be experienced by the audience. This beauty is found in the movements and music. The aesthetic value contained in this dance stems from Javanese dance concepts, as every movement and concept used in the Bedhaya Larung Dance incorporates the concept of offerings. The presence of the Bedhaya Larung Dance in the midst of community life attracts public interest. The community also plays a role in the arts and ceremonies that emerge and develop. It is not only a ritual

dance but also serves as entertainment for the community. (Rustandi, n.d.)

In the community's view, the Bedhaya Larung Dance is a form of entertainment, emphasizing aesthetics and visual enjoyment, providing a refreshing experience for its audience. The large number of people from within and outside the region who came to watch the performance responded positively to the Bedhaya Larung Dance and its rituals. The audience at the ceremony consisted of people from various walks of life, including the elderly, young people, and children. The performance aimed to achieve spiritual satisfaction for the audience. Furthermore, this spectacle is often linked to economic and tourism aspects. Dance serves as a widely marketed cultural attraction, allowing the public to view it as a creative instrument capable of introducing the richness of tradition to communities beyond Telaga Ngebel without being bound by specific rules.

According to Winda, the trainer and person in charge of the Bedhaya Larung Dance, the Bedhaya Larung Dance is often positioned as the pinnacle of performance aesthetics, presenting a visual experience that transcends mere entertainment into a spectacle. This dance is appreciated for its ability to create a sublime and serene atmosphere through the finely synchronized movements of the nine dancers. The public also views the Bedhaya Dance as an ideal representation of the elegance of Javanese culture, where every transition in floor patterns and intricate costumes is viewed as a visual delight. They admire how the nine dancers can move as if they were one unified whole. As a spectacle, the Bedhaya Dance is inseparable from the musical accompaniment of a special gendhing (traditional musical instrument). The slow beats and the singer's vocals create a relaxing effect, while simultaneously appreciating the depth of this complex yet soothing traditional musical art.

Judging by the floor plan of the Bedhaya Larung Dance, the movements of the dancers from one formation to another are seen as carefully choreographed. Audiences are often captivated by the way the dancers evenly fill the stage space and create a visual balance that provides aesthetic satisfaction for all who watch. The Bedhaya Larung Dance successfully functions as a medium of cultural communication, where beauty serves as a gateway for the public to learn more about the Javanese philosophy of life, reflected in the calm and balance of movement.

3.1.2 Secondary Function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance

The secondary function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance in the community is manifested as local wisdom. The younger generation can develop social and educational values reflected in the precise tempo and group movements, or the value of harmony through balance, as well as the values of etiquette and ethics implied in the gentle gestures of the Bedhaya Larung Dance. This process indirectly shapes the character and behavioral patterns of the younger generation, aligning with local social norms.

3.1.2.1 Bedhaya Dance as a Social Tool

The importance of establishing social relationships in society is undeniable, given that humans are essentially social creatures who need each other in every interaction. This interdependence between individuals creates structured relationship patterns to meet life's needs, both materially and emotionally. In line with this idea, Koentjaraningrat (1990:180) defines society as a unified human community that interacts according to a specific system of customs and traditions bound by a shared sense of identity. Thus, social interaction is not merely a process of exchanging information but a primary foundation for strengthening solidarity and maintaining cultural values that serve as a unifying force within a community.

Social relationships are evident in the preparation and performance process of the Bedhaya Larung Dance. This dynamic begins with joint practice. This process is evident in the interaction between trainer and dancer, dancer and dancer, and dancer and musician, who constantly communicate during the presentation of the material. This indirectly serves as a communication bridge for the Purwo Ayu Margi Utama Javanese religious group, unfamiliar with the world of art, to integrate into the ceremony. In addition, the organizing committee and the sub-district government, who provide a platform and support, foster a sense of togetherness and solidarity among all. Furthermore, this solidarity extends to include the organizing committee and the sub-district government. The synergy between the artists and those who provide the platform, moral support, and encouragement creates a sense of shared ownership of this tradition. This collaboration not only ensures the technical success of the performance but also fosters a strong sense of togetherness and social solidarity among all stakeholders involved in Larungan Telaga Ngebel.

The community views the Bedhaya Larung Dance as a vital social tool, as it serves as a bonding force between individuals and a medium for interaction that transcends economic status and personal background. In a societal context, dance is not a passive spectacle but rather a means of communication that can dissolve social rigidity and foster a sense of brotherhood. Art cannot thrive without the attention and response of the audience. Furthermore, the Bedhaya Larung Dance is only performed during the Larung Sesaji Telaga Ngebel ceremony. Indirectly, the audience also forges social connections with other members of the community, both familiar and unfamiliar. A gathering that transcends social status while enjoying a performance. Thus, in the eyes of the community, dance is a manifestation of the spirit of mutual cooperation, strengthening the social fabric and ensuring that the values of togetherness are maintained from generation to generation.

3.1.2.2 Bedhaya Larung Dance as an Educational Tool

Dance plays a vital role in the fabric of human life because its existence is always closely intertwined with the values, norms, and rituals prevailing in society. As a medium that transcends entertainment, dance serves as an educational tool to develop individual aesthetic sensitivity through various appreciation activities and creative work experiences. Through the process of learning movement, individuals are not only trained physically but also emotionally honed to understand beauty that aligns with ethical and moral standards. Dance also serves as a window of knowledge, in-depthly teaching the history and cultural development of a region. Every element of a dance, from the dynamics of movement and floor

patterns to the symbolism of costumes, contains its own historical narrative and philosophical meaning, reflecting the collective identity of its creators. Thus, dance education becomes a strategic instrument for developing characters who respect ancestral heritage and possess high cultural intelligence.

In society, dance as an educational tool is seen not only as an effort to hone physical skills, but more importantly, as a character builder and the instillation of profound moral values. The community believes that through the process of learning dance, an individual indirectly cultivates the discipline, patience, and concentration that are essential in everyday life. Furthermore, dance is seen as an effective cultural curriculum for introducing history, ethics, and etiquette to the younger generation. Each movement often contains philosophical symbols about how to behave politely and harmoniously. Therefore, teaching dance in a social setting is considered capable of developing emotional and social intelligence, while simultaneously serving as a bulwark of national identity, strengthening patriotism amidst the tide of modernization.

The Bedhaya Larung dance as an educational tool is intended to be practiced during the preparation for the Larung Sesaji ceremony, where a dance instructor seeks dancers and teaches them the dance movements. This indirectly conveys creative experience and fosters a sense of ownership of the traditional art form. This fosters inheritance and regeneration. Furthermore, the Bedhaya Larung dance teaches audiences both the norms and moral values conveyed in each performance, and the dance movements themselves convey valuable lessons that can be learned and applied in everyday life.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The primary function of the Bedhaya Larung dance

The Bedhaya Larung dance occupies a highly sacred place in the traditional larung sesaji ceremony, a tradition passed down through generations. This dance serves as a medium of communication between humans and supernatural powers (beyond themselves). The community believes this dance possesses magical powers to maintain the balance of nature, ward off disaster (bala) and ensure a successful harvest. Therefore, every element of the dance—from the movements and costumes to the accompanying music—must adhere to strict traditional rules and norms. This dance not only satisfies aesthetic needs (beauty), but also serves as an important instrument for the community to maintain local customs and traditions so they remain sustainable. This dance is performed by nine dancers with finely synchronized movements, creating a sublime, calm, and serene atmosphere. The performance is accompanied by special gendhing music with slow beats and the vocals of a female singer (pesinden), which provide a relaxing effect. The Bedhaya Larung dance is seen as a creative asset with potential for economic and tourism benefits. This dance is able to introduce the richness of tradition to communities outside the Telaga Ngebek area in a more flexible manner (without being bound by rigid sacred rules when performed as a public spectacle). Ari Bedhaya Larung has succeeded in becoming a medium for cultural communication. Its visual and auditory beauty

serves as a gateway for audiences to understand the Javanese philosophy of life, which prioritizes serenity, depth of feeling, and balance.

4.2 Secondary Function of the Bedhaya Larung Dance

Social relationships and interactions between individuals are the primary foundation of humans as social beings, fulfilling both material and emotional needs, while simultaneously strengthening group solidarity bound by shared cultural identity and customs. In the context of the Bedhaya Larung Dance performance at the Larung Sesaji ceremony at Telaga Ngebel, this dance is not merely a passive spectacle or a mere aesthetic pleasure, but rather transforms into a vital social tool within the community. The intensive interaction and communication patterns established within this art form—from the process of providing material between trainers, dancers, and musicians, to the synergy between the organizing committee and the sub-district government—successfully create an inclusive communication bridge. This platform even united the Purwo Ayu Margi Utama Javanese religious group, initially unfamiliar with the arts, and enabled them to integrate into the ceremony. Furthermore, this ritual performance, held only once a year, has proven effective in breaking down barriers and social rigidities among the audience, creating a space for equal encounters for both acquaintances and strangers, regardless of economic status or personal background. Ultimately, the Bedhaya Larung Dance is internalized by the people of Ngebel District as a concrete manifestation of the spirit of mutual cooperation that not only fosters a sense of brotherhood but also strengthens social structures and ensures that these shared values are preserved from generation to generation.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

This research provides significant contributions academically and practically through documentation, analysis, and in-depth understanding of the function of Shodiq Pristiwanto's Bedhaya Larung Dance as a representation of the Larungan tradition of Telaga Ngebel in Ponorogo Regency. Theoretically, this study enriches the development of science in the field of dance studies—particularly focusing on the function of choreography and cultural representation—by dissecting the structure, content of the dance, and its close relationship with the local tradition that became the source of inspiration for its creation. In addition to being a valuable source of scientific reference for students, academics, artists, and the wider community, this research also carries the mission of cultural preservation. By recording the religious, social, and cultural values contained in the larungan tradition, this research has succeeded in strengthening the cultural identity of the Telaga Ngebel community while ensuring that this noble traditional heritage remains recognized, understood, and can be passed down well to future generations.

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