

Symbolical Meaning of *Langen Puspitosari* Dance in Building Students Character in *Suryokencono* Arts Association

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Abstract—The study aimed to find out and explain the symbolical meaning in *Langen Puspitosari* dance in building students character who are studying in *Suryokencono* Arts Association. The research used qualitative research and supported by semiotic analysis method. Data sources were informants, documents relating to *Langen Puspitosari*, and literature review. Data collection techniques used observation, in-depth interviews (semi-structured), and documentation. The findings showed that the symbolical meaning of *Langen Puspitosari* dance was found in motions, clothing or dress, make-up (cosmetology), dance accompaniment, and property. This meaning contains the character values and noble character and the character can be taught to students who are currently studying in *Suryokencono* Arts Association.

Keywords—symbolical meaning, *Langen Puspitosari* dance, character building, *Suryokencono* arts association.

I. INTRODUCTION

Dance is one of the branches of art that develops in Indonesia. The art has different characteristics in each region, such the classical Yogyakarta style dance. Today, the classical Yogyakarta style dance is widely studied both in formal institutions through the subject of arts and cultural, and local content, and in non-formal institutions such dance studios. Unfortunately, it is found fact that the dance in some regions is still underestimated by the community. According to them, art is not important and might not have a good impact to their children. This fact is marked by people who consider the children are better to achieve high score on either learning of language or mathematics than dance. The community also begins to ignore the norms, which is marked by the cases of neglect, drug cases, and so on.

Some people also consider the classical dance is an outdated and unattractive. Some people who learn dance only emphasize the memorization, without know the insight and history of the dance. Then, the students do not know the meaning and message of character values in the dance. But, in exploring in-depth of the classical dance actually has unique that found in supporting elements of the dance such as motion, clothing, and so on.

Today, a lot of non-formal institutions teach classical Yogyakarta style dance and have a special dance as its

trademark. Such *Suryokencono* Arts Association has *Langen Puspitosari* dance. This dance has unique motions and different from another classical princess dance. The variety is simple and shorter in duration than *golek* dance.

Based on the background, the study describes the symbolical meaning of dance that has character values in building student character in *Suryokencono* Arts Association. Some people consider that learning art is not important and might not have good impact. This fact is marked by people who consider are better to achieve high score on either learning of language or mathematics than dance. The community also begins to ignore the norms, which is marked by the cases of neglect, drug cases, and so on. The study conducted in *Suryokencono* Arts Association which has *Langen Puspitosari* dance. This dance has symbolical meaning within elements that contains character values.

This research is very urgent due to it might become the solution to solve the character problems, which will give benefits for students who are studying in *Suryokencono* Arts Association.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II presents related works/literature review. Section III describes material & methodology of this research. Section IV presents the obtained results and following by discussion. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. RUDIMENTARY

A. Symbolical Meaning

Symbols are medium in understanding an object. Meanwhile, according to Sahid [1] symbol is a sign to reference, and the reference has been formed conventionally, i.e. there is agreement between the user and the reference.

B. Dance

Dance is a type of culture and owned in every region in Indonesia, that the culture has existed since the ancient times. Primitive humans use motions as medium for communication, media of offerings, worship, and so on, because they do not express in words [2].

C. Classical Yogyakarta Style Dance

According to Sunaryadi [3], classical Yogyakarta style dance is not merely a spectacle or performance, but also as a guide that has character education values. The classical Yogyakarta style dance has rules or pathokan that have existed since long

time ago and are always obeyed by the dancers. The rules are standard rules and non-standard rules. According to Suryobrongto through Yogyakarta Palace Museum [4] the standard rules or pathokan consists of 7 things, namely: (a) pandangan, (b) pacak-gulu, (c) deg, (d) cetik motion, (e) mlumahing pupu, (f) nyelekenhing the toes, and (g) mendhak.

When a dancer has understood the pathokan, they must also understand the Joged Mataram, which consists of: (a) sawiji, (b) greget, (c) sengguh, (d) ora mingkuh.

D. Dance supporting elements

Dance supporting elements are; (a) motions, (b) music or accompaniment, (c) venue, (d) floor pattern, (e) time, (f) clothing or dress, (g) makeup (cosmetology), and (h) property [5]. The article will try to explain the dance supporting elements in supporting the symbolical meaning of Puspitosari dance and are limited only to motion, accompaniment, clothing or dress, makeup (Cosmetology), and property.

1) Motion is an important element in a dance

It consists of meaningful motion and pure motion. Meaningful motion is motions and has certain meaning. Meanwhile, pure motion is motions and only emphasizes on beauty without prioritizing the meaning [2]. Meaningful and pure motions are found in classical dance. These motions are emerged from imitating the everyday activities, as well as the natural surroundings. The dance creators usually choose the things that exist in the environment, and convert into a series of motion. This study divides *Langen Puspitosari* dance motion into two parts; meaningful motion and pure motion. The motions of meaningful motion will find the meaning of motion and its relation to character building.

2) Accompaniment

The basic elements of music are tone, rhythm and melody. Rhythm is beating from music, generally with repeated accents regularly [2]. Rhythm in dance manifests in motions, while rhythm of music manifests in voice and sound settings. Music is not just an accompaniment, but music is dance's partner [2].

3) Clothing

Clothing is all equipment used to cover the body. But clothing actually is not merely to protect and cover the body, but can also be used to decorate the dancer in order they become beautiful when dancing. In the section of clothing, the article will try to explain the clothing used in the beginning of *Puspitosari* was created and current clothing in performing the dance.

4) Makeup (Cosmetology)

Makeup (cosmetology) aims to make the dancers having different appearance from everyday conditions.

5) Property

The property here is the supporting object used in dance.

E. Character Education

The implementation of character education is not only in family environment, but also both in formal and non-formal environment (institutions). The character education must teach as early, which is carried out through habituation (accustomed). Some people will conduct or act good things because of the habits since the childhood. The results of the character education are not immediately seen. Character is a compatible mixture of all the good that is identified by religious traditions, wise people, literary stories, and a group of people with good understanding [6]. Based on this explanation, the character is called good when someone is able to conduct or act good to respond the situation according to good moral.

Character education can be carried out with the help of several parties, such as parents, schools, and teachers [7]. The implementation of character education is not limited to family and formal institutions, but can also be supported by education in a studio, such classical dance studio. In this case, teachers still play important role in building the character of students. According to Lickona [6], teachers have power to teach values and character within children among three ways:

- a) Teacher can be an effective person with full of love to the students
- b) Teacher can become a role model and all the behavior will be imitated by the students. When the teacher conducts good things, then the student will imitate the good things.
- c) Teachers can become ethical mentors, provide moral instruction and guidance through explanation, discussion, motivating, and so on.

Character education values provided by government are 18-character values presented by Ministry of National Education. The values are: (1) religious, (2) honest, (3) tolerance, (4) discipline, (5) hard work, (6) creative, (7) independent, (8) democratic, (9) curiosity, (10) national spirit, (11) love to country (patriotism), (12) respect for achievement, (13) friendly / communicative, (14) love of peace, (15) love to read, (16) care to the environment, (17) social care, and (18) responsibility (Wibowo: 2012). These values contain attitudes and behavior, and make people more have character. But the values can be adapted to the environment. The eighteen values can be taught through dance, but there are some additional character values into classical Yogyakarta style dance. The values are (1) courteous, (2) manners, (3) *empan papan* [8].

F. Related Works

This sub-section presents related works about this research. Hartono and Lestari [9], describes the classical Yogyakarta style dance as medium to build character to person who is studying the dance, and symbols in motions provide meaning. Aynur in [7] describes the character education, as well as the supporting factors, such as family, school, community, and teachers. Hidayati in [10] discusses the symbolical meaning of Bajidor Kahot dance. The theories in this study are semiotic theory, nonverbal communication theory, and dance. This study aims to find out the meaning within among in clothing and accessories, song lyrics, and meaning of *Bajidor Kahot* motions.

III. MATERIAL & METHODOLOGY

This section describes material and proposed methodology.

A. Data

Data study were obtained through observation, in-depth interviews (semi-structure) from teachers at *Suryokencono* Arts Association as informants, teachers from studio of classical Yogyakarta style dance, *Puspitosari* dance accompanist, students who are studying in *Suryokencono* Arts Association, and documents of *Langen Puspitosari* dance to complete the information needed. The data validity used triangulation techniques and for particular study used source triangulation. Data analyses used data reduction, data presentation, and draw the conclusion.

B. Method

The research of the symbolic meaning of *Langen Puspitosari* dance in the formation of the character of students in the *Suryokencono* Arts Association uses a type of qualitative research, with the semiotic analysis method of Rolland Barthes. Barthes's concept is connotation and denotation. Barthes model is also called a two-stage signification (Orders of Signification) which explains that the significance of the first stage is the signifier and signified relationship in a sign.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the obtained result and following by discussion.

A. Result

Langen Puspitosari dance comes from the word of *langen* or *lelangen* which means *dolanan* or games. *Puspita* means flower, and *sari* means core. The purpose of this dance is about children, adolescents, or women, who are growing up and love to make up but still have childish nature by playing in flower garden. *Langen Puspitosari* was originally created for dance competition material for children in elementary school age, which was originally taught to the Association of Dance Teachers in Special Region of Yogyakarta. But in its development, *Langen Puspitosari* dance may be studied by all ages. The sequences of variances of this dance are:

- *Sembahan*
- *Kicat lembehan, ngancap kanan, minger kanan.*
- *Dolanan ali-ali kanan dan kiri,*
- *Atur-atur, ngancap kanan*
- *Ulap-ulap kicat, sendi*
- *Lilingan supe, ngancap kanan, minger kanan*
- *Methik sekar, lembehan, sendi minger*
- *Ngagem sekar (nyumping sekar tumpang tali), ngancap kiri*
- *Gidrah jimpit sampur*
- *Tinting kanan encot*
- *Kipas-kipas (lampah gleleng kipas-kipas) maju mundur*
- *Nglela-nglela gedrug, sendi ngglebag*
- *Nyamber kiri dan kanan*
- *Panggal jengkeng.*

Symbolical meaning and character values on *Langen Puspitosari* dance including:

1) *Symbolical meaning Langen Puspitosari* dance meaningful motion and the meaning on *Langen Puspitosari* dance are:

- *Sembahan*

The meaning of *sembahan* is, always remember the God the Almighty who has created human, and respects to the king or others people who watch the *Langen Puspitosari* dance.

- *Kicat lembehan*

The meaning of *Kicat lembehan* is, to walk with full of careful and attention.

- *Dolanan ali-ali*

The meaning of *dolanan ali-ali* is, children or women who like to play rings.

- *Atur-atur*

The meaning of *atur-atur* is, present the flower and pray to the God the Almighty.

- *Ulap-ulap kicat*

The meaning of *ulat – ulat kicat* is, when a child or person see something, he/she must be very careful.

- *Lilingan supe*

Means, it sees the rings that wore by woman as jewelry and she might not be arrogant.

- *Methik sekar*

Methik Sekar means pick the flowers. Children and woman usually interest to flowers and like to pick them.

- *Ngagem sekar*

The motions are inspired by the woman interest to flower, that after she picked the flowers, then she will put the flower in her ears.

- *Lampah gleleng kipas-kipas*

The motions are inspired by attitudes of children or women who have self-confident, but they are not arrogant. The motions of *kipas – kipas* describe the soft of children or woman and having manner and careful attitudes.

- *Nglela-nglela gedrug*

The motions are inspired by either children or woman who likes to play a doll (puppet), but they make up it and combined with *gedrug* motions. Means, children or woman like to play the doll, but they consider to always careful to anything. Based on the explanation, concluded that the character values in *Langen Puspitosari* dance are religious, manner, social care and tolerance.

2) *Symbolical meaning on Langen Puspitosari* dance accompaniment

Langen Puspitosari uses *gendhing* which has meaning of praise and gratitude to God the Almighty. We as humans, always pray that always be given health and blessings in life. Based on the explanation, concluded that the character value in *Langen Puspitosari* dance accompaniment is religious.

3) *Symbolical meaning of clothing on Langen Puspitosari* dance

The clothing is inspired by clothes that wore by princess. The clothing uses *dodot alit* model. The color selection is adjusted

to theme; white and red. The clothing and meaning are described as follows:

- The clothing inside or flat fabric with *cindhe berwiru* pattern

Pattern of *cindhe* fabric is flower that resembles snake scale. It means, a strength and protection.

- *Dodot* fabric with pattern of *parang rusak kesid ceplok gurdha*

It means, containing hope and message to build character and good manner within young generation and become role model for anyone.

- *Sampur cindhe merah*
- *Sanggul tekuk*, (Bun buckling)

It means, children who are growing up must be ready to carry the duties and responsibilities.

- *Sabuk* atau *slepe*, (belt)

Slepe is used by twisted to the body. It means, woman must always lust her passions.

- *Kalung susun*, (stacking necklaces)

It has meaning the level of human life starting from birth, marriage, and dead. Human must always remember the level of life in order have character and good manner.

- *Gelang*, (Bracelet)

It means a warning to human in order to always remember the eternity of the Lord.

- *Ceplok jebahan*,

Ceplok jebahan has three different colors; red, yellow, and green. It means, a woman must always lust her passions in order to have good character and manner.

- *Pelik*

Pelik is inspired by jasmine and imitated into paper. Jasmine has fragrant smell. It means, woman should make proud the self, family, and country.

- *Pethat gunung*

Means, it is the majesty of God who creates everything. Human must always remember to God.

- *One cundhuk mentul*

It means, there is no God but Allah, and human must always pray to God the Almighty.

- *Bulu*, (feathers)

Feathers are used to give a beauty on *Langen Puspitosari* dance.

- *Subang* atau anting (earrings)

It means a warning to human in order to always remember the eternity of the Lord. Based on the explanation, concluded that the character values in *Langen Puspitosari* motions are religious, manners, responsible, and love to country.

- a) Symbolical meaning of make-up (cosmetology) on *Langen Puspitosari* dance

Make-up (cosmetology) in this dance only has function to reinforce the dancer's face.

- b) Symbolical meaning of properties on *Langen Puspitosari* dance The property is Fan. The fan is adjusted in color and fur. It means a tenderness and politeness of a woman.

Based on the explanation, concluded that the character value in *Langen Puspitosari* motions is manners. Students' character building in Suryokencono Arts Association. Teachers in the art association provide material to students through process of imitation and the teacher explains the meaning and purpose of *Langen Puspitosari* dance. In this case, teacher can be an effective person with full of love to the students. Teacher can become a role model and all the behavior will be imitated by the students. When the teacher conducts good things, then the student will imitate the good things. Teachers become ethical mentors, provide moral instruction, and guidance through explanation, discussion, and motivating during teaching the *Langen Puspitosari* dance. It aims, the students who are studying in art association not only memorize the dance, but also know and imitate the characters within the dance. The results of this study states that *Langen Puspitosari* dance has meanings within the motions, clothing or dress, make-up, dance accompaniment, and properties. The meanings contain character values and manners.

V. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Langen Puspitosari dance is firstly intended for children on elementary school age. But, in its development, this dance can be learned by anyone. The dance has meanings within motion, clothing or dress, makeup, dance accompaniment, and properties. The meaning contains the character values and manner that can be taught to students or anyone who learns the dance.

It needs further research on review the symbolical meaning of the dance and what does the character has imitated by student who studied *Langen Puspitosari* dance. The disadvantages in the study are the lack of in-depth study of symbolic meaning and character values, as well as the lack of information from the notes of the dance. Another recommendation is that the research can be used as reference to conduct further research on symbolic meaning and character building through dance. For teachers, they need to give more attention and be able to explain the dance material carefully and detail, in order the meaning and character education values of the dance can be understood by students.

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