

# The Shifting of Function Towards *Galombang Duo Baleh* Dancers From Men to Women

Gemala Dewi\*, Juju Masunah, Yuliawan Kasmahidayat

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia  
Bandung, Indonesia

\*gemaladewinurwan@gmail.com

**Abstract**—The Galombang duo baleh dance is a Minangkabau traditional dance. It was born in 1962. It started at Gelombang arts in 1932. The dance will be presented by dancers for welcoming an honored guest. At the beginning of history, men were the main role of the Galombang duo baleh dance. Time by time, Women also took apart for presenting the dance. In this article, we aimed to discuss the function transformation of the dance from men dancer to women dancer. We used a qualitative study for analysis with a performance approach study. The changing process analysis managed multidisciplinary knowledge such as sociology and anthropology. We collected data through documented interview observation and library review. The function transformation was influenced by changes in the times. The community was more interested in a dance performance by women than men.

**Keywords**—function transformation, galombang dance

## I. INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau society is one of the ethnics that exist in Indonesia which most of them lives in West Sumatera. The word Minangkabau is not only showing the ethnics but also define the culture and its geographical region, as when talking about Minangkabau art, it is not right calling it West Sumatera art. Minangkabau art is basically a collection of games from the people within them that are open, so it can be owned by a group in society or community that causes it to change easily. Various geographical conditions about the amount of people and changing of an era produced a new culture in Minangkabau society in Kota Padang. As it can be seen Padang as the capital city of West Sumatera is certainly influenced by modern culture so it is different from other Minangkabau societies. The urbanization process is not the amount of the same diversity but people from various cultural society. In a simple definition, urbanization is only one of many ethnical relationships and in fact, the major success does not change its nature [1]. The hallmark of urbanization is how it fits in with other customary arrangements in the region. So that it has a positive impact on the development of performing arts in Minangkabau.

One of the Minangkabau traditional arts, Galombang dance is undergoing changes as a result of the urbanization process of the development of Kota Padang. Galombang dance

is a traditional dance used to welcome guests. It was originally danced by dozens of men or warriors. Apart from being the main pillar (*limpapeh*), women are also custodians of inheritance, and Minangkabau women are taught to be independent at home, because some movements use the *pencak silat* movement. The form of presentation of the Galombang dance is done in one direction facing guests, some use two directions in the form of opposing groups then separated by carano treats. Carano is a tool for placing betel, areca nut, gambier, calx, and tobacco which is made from a convex-shaped baking sheet which means *baadat bapusako*. One of the well-known Galombang dances in West Sumatra is *Galombang Duo Baleh* dance which is danced by twelve male dancers with a one-way *pencak silat* movement. Currently the Galombang dance is danced by women as a welcome for guests at weddings, government events and even appearing at the coronation of the head of the village but to welcome guests who come. Galombang is certifiably meaningful in society's life especially in wedding ceremony. Seeing this problem is certainly inappropriate with the essence of women in Minangkabau who are shown live in front of the general public meanwhile women in Minangkabau are called "*limpapeh rumah nan gadang, sumarak dalam nagari hiasan di dalam kampuang nan tau jo malu dan sopan, nan ka menghias kampuang jo halaman hiasan dunia jo akhiraik kok auih tampek mintak aia, lapa tampek mintak nasi*" [2]. The statement means that a woman is an honored human figure because women hold a symbol of family self-esteem and women are expressed as human figures who uphold politeness and respect. Apart from being the main pillar, women are guardians of inheritance and Minangkabau women are taught to be independent at home, because previously women were not allowed to do art performances that were seen in the public, such as the art of randai and silek Galombang.

This problem is caused by the development or impact of globalization, the emergence of the entertainment and tourism industry in West Sumatra which has led to the emergence of dance creations made by various artists and production houses in West Sumatra. According to Indrayuda "*the male roll reality Galombang dance traditionally in nagari has been eliminated with the dominance of women has dancers of the Galombang creation nowadays*" [2].

The Minangkabau society believe that some of their customs cannot change, although some of them can experience changes due to adapting to the times. Errington termed it as custom which has core elements and peripheral elements [3]. "The peripheral elements can usually be allowed to change as long as the core elements remain fundamentally the same" [3]. The Minangkabau society call their customs that cannot change as *adat nan sabana adat*, which means goodness. Transition to urban life involves other factors from changing roles, changing lifestyle, organizational restructuring, changing cultural artifacts and symbolism. More importantly, members of the affected community need to understand new meanings, new values within the city framework [4].

Changes are adding to better living conditions can be reflected in the Galombang dance form. Since having been dominant by men in Minangkabau, the women have been enthusiastically embraced it, giving rise to new creative trends. Changes that occur in terms of geographic composition and population are the factors controlling the hybridity of the Minangkabau cultural form.

From the explanation above, the researcher saw the process of changing the cultural transformation from one generation to another by the Minangkabau society whose functional culture was very dependent on adaptation to the environment. The existence of the environment is dynamic in nature following the development of the human life force as it happened in the life force of art. The process of creativity is at least closely related to the goals and intentions of the artwork that the artists want as a holder.

The value of transformation according to Kuntowijoyo is a scientific concept or analytical tool to understand the world because by understanding changes, at least two conditions or circumstances can be known, that is called the pre-change state and the post-change state [5]. Transformation is the displacement or shift of a thing in another or new direction without changing the structure in them, even though in its new form it has undergone changes. The framework for cultural transformation is structure and culture. Meanwhile, according to Pujieleksono, transformation involves changes in social and ecological relations networks [6]. If the structure of the web is changed, there will be a transformation of social institutions, values and thoughts in it.

## II. METHODS

The paradigm used in this research is qualitative, with a descriptive analysis method.

The data presented in this study are qualitative data, obtained by collecting various information and informants, information from various sources, observation, interviews, and documentation. The object of research is the current traditional dance and Galombang dance in West Sumatra. Data were collected using an interview approach, interviews were conducted to obtain data about women in the process and performance of the Galombang dance. In addition to interviews, researchers also conducted focused and directed

observations on the problems in the study so it could be maximized the direct observations on the object of the research. The observations that were become the focus of the researcher were the problem of arable concepts, choreography, performance concepts, and dance patterns.

Data analysis was carried out with an ethnographic model that determined the object of research, field observations, conducted analyzes, and made focused observations.

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Galombang dance is a traditional dance of the Minangkabau society which is the identity of the region. Creating beauty in a dance is a natural thing. As it known that dance belongs to the field of art which identical with form of expressions that are considered based on variation, contrast, climax, transition, balance, series, repetition, and harmony [7].

This dance has become a part of the Minang culture. Its existence is inseparable from *Silek*. Early development was not called dance, but *Silek Galombang* which grew and developed within the community that adheres to the matrilineal system. In the early days the dancers were only men in the style of *pencak silat* with a floor pattern lined up in two rows backwards. This art is indeed a welcoming function and is displayed to welcome respected guests at the *alek nagari* or target inauguration. Galombang dance has terms used to refer to this dance, such as *BaGalombang* which means dancing Galombang, *Galombang Duo Baleh* or Galombang Dance performed by 12 people, *Galombang Manyongsong* to call Galombang Dance which is done in one direction, and as for *Galombang Balawan*, the name for dance which is done in two directions from the host and the guest.

The definition of Galombang itself means ocean wave that comes from the natural surroundings. The motion has a variety of silat movements. The movement of the Galombang dance itself has variations of silat movements shaped like ocean waves. The silat movement used in the basis of this dance is very visible in the stances of the feet and hands, which are called *kudo-kudo*, *tapuak*, *siku-siku*, *simbek*, and *gelek*. The movements performed with the feet are known as the *langkah duo*, the *langkah tigo*, and the *langkah ampek*. This Galombang dance is accompanied by *pupuik batang padi*, *tasa* and *gandang tambua*. The *tambua tasa* instrument is a small drum consisting of one surface to be beaten which the community calls 'tasa'. The *tasa* and *gandang tambua* have a rhythm and the dynamics of the music which always increasing, becoming faster and louder when the dancers are facing each other and getting closer. The name of the song that accompanies the Galombang dance is called "Malalu" which is the basic rhythm of the song Gandang Tambua.

The make-up and clothing used by the 12 dancers including the bearer of the *marawa* in this Galombang dance performance do not wear makeup like the modern dancers. This is because its dancers are men by considering the movements carried out by dashing movements that reflect courage. The Galombang dance can be seen in figure 1.



Fig. 1. Galombang dance that is called Silek Galombang (Docs. by Palito Nyalo).

Galombang means waves rolling towards the beach. Galombang for the title of the dance is a figurative word related to the welcoming event of guests with the Minangkabau tradition. Guests who come will be greeted regularly and, in a row, until they get to their seats, it is a joy like a boat carried by the waves to the beach. MID Jamal provides an overview that Galombang Dance is a traditional dance that functions as part of a ceremony in Minangkabau called traditional dance [8]. This traditional dance aims to welcome respected guests.

Galombang dance is one of the traditional Minangkabau dances which is owned by every village in Minangkabau, West Sumatra. The globalization that has had an impact on the emergence of the entertainment industry in West Sumatra has led to the emergence of dance creations by dance artists from various production houses in West Sumatra. The new dance has shifted the traditional dance which is the cultural heritage of the Minangkabau society. By the development of the times, local artists are currently feeling uneasy about the shifting of Minangkabau dance rules. The role of men in Galombang dance has been lost traditionally by the dominance of women as Galombang dancers today.

Galombang dance which is arranged in this modern era is incorporated in various art performances in West Sumatra. From the aspects of use and function of Galombang creative dance is one of the new dance forms that change old dances or create dance with new ideas. Galombang dance is currently a derivative dance from the existing Galombang and is a cultural heritage of the Minangkabau society in West Sumatra. Currently it is undergoing a transformation into a creative Galombang dance which is more dominated by female dancers as its appearance. Nowadays, the dance is dominantly performed by the women as dancers and carano bearers and even the dominance of women is increasingly visible because sometimes the Galombang dance is danced without male dancers (see figure 2).



Fig. 2. Galombang dance, the process of welcoming guests (Docs. by Sarai Sarumpun March 2020).

Based on observations at the Sarai Sarumpun studio which located in Taruko, Kota Padang, West Sumatra, the Galombang dance has never performed without both men and women. It shows that the two dancers always appear in Galombang dance creations by Sarai Sarumpun studio. The dance creations used by studio choreographers use male and female dancers. The more female dancers in the Galombang dance, the more impressive the dances and events displayed. The presence of women has a big influence in Galombang dance performances. Consumers asked to present beautiful women resulting the existence of male dancers was increasingly displaced in the creation of the Galombang dance performance.

The existence of women currently plays the main role in the performance of the Galombang dance that the presence of female dancers represents the various types and styles of clothing that are displayed. Minangkabau custom has eliminated the role of men as protectors of guests as they usually form the order after dancing. Hidayat states that freedom and equality is the rationalism that separates the private and public circumstance [9]. The liberal feminine framework is to fight for equality of opportunity for every individual including women as Galombang dancers even until now it has become dominant in Galombang dance performances in West Sumatra. Based on observations so far, most of the consumer in this era demand female dancers in Galombang dance in every appearance, meaning that the presence of women in this dance is considered meaningful by society.

The role of women in Galombang dance can determine whether the dance gets a good response from the community and the level of release of Galombang dance by the community depends on the place and the use of female dancers in it. This shows that the presence of women plays a role in determining the quality of a dance in performing arts. The women in this dance represented as *Bundo Kanduang* who will wait for guests, then symbolizing the guests who are greeted with the Galombang dance are guests of honor who are not only

welcomed by *Niniak Mamak* but also *Bundo Kandung*. That is why the role of female dancers as *bundo kanduang* welcoming respected guests. Currently there has been a gender transformation from the aspect of the role of dancers in this dance.

As can be seen in the art studios in the cities of Padang, Bukit Tinggi, and Padang Panjang, women are now a dance icon in West Sumatra. Art galleries in Kota Padang always prioritize women in the production of their dance works. This was witnessed in Galombang Sarai Sarumpun, Syofiani, and Indojadi dances, some studios in Kota Padang. Those three are the popular art studio galleries both then and now.



Fig. 3. Galombang dance by Sarai Sarumpun Studio (Dokumentasi Gemala Dewi 2020).

Like the make-up and clothing of female dancers in the Galombang dance performance with a more striking style, it emphasizes more on dress than on dance movements or the purpose of the dance itself (figure 3). The role of women in Galombang dance is referred to as "Kapalo Galeh". This refers to the main factor in appearance. Apart from being the main character, a female dancer is a characteristic of a more varied studio than when it is only used by men. In the past, women were prohibited from dancing as seen from the various dance traditions that have become the cultural heritage of the Minangkabau society. Currently women have shifted the role of men as Galombang dancers in West Sumatra.

The existence and role of women has become a focal point in this Galombang dance as well as influencing traditional values in Minangkabau. Talking about cultural shifts or changes, an anthropologist argues that no single culture is owned by a particular society as a completely original culture [10]. The original culture was not the more it has today. After going through the process of civilization for a long time, the original culture is enriched with other cultural elements so that the enrichment of other cultures with cultural elements through the diffusion process, acculturation and assimilation processes, and cultural innovation. This means that in the history of

human civilization there is no culture that has not changed at all. Boas said that the phenomenon of the form of change or shift that occurred was actually more of a result of historical events and the culture of its predecessors [11].

In the theory of socio-cultural science, there are two important factors that influence the process of cultural change. The first is the internal forces and the second is the external forces. These two factors each have a strong influence on the process of cultural change, although the level of dominance is not always the same. The shifting of the pressures that press culture against this, the pressure comes from the inside or comes from outside.

Factors that occur from the inside are often caused by a shift from a change of generations to a new paradigm. That changes are cultural changes that hinder cultural innovations. This is caused by the clash of values between the older generation and the younger generation who receive cultural heritage. While external factors are based on cultural influences from outside through cultural contact (cultural encounters) which occurs in cultural contact with various basic interests, even motivation to rule. The various kinds of art products that exist are a reflection of the government structure system that accommodates and then influences the creativity of art performers. The shift of the traditional to modern government system has resulted in rapid changes in urban life. The people who live in the rural area have developed into advanced urban communities, so the younger generations, who were originally inherited as a culture in their local communities, after receiving the influence of the new culture, brought about cultural innovations. In short, the shift that is taking place is basically a process of cultural rationalization that leads to adjustment, so the cultural elements are really fast in a short time.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The shift in traditional arts proves that the art performers in interpreting folk traditional dance are no longer positioned as a static function, but are adjusted by adding or subtracting various elements of art to become new traditional arts. The addition and subtraction still carried out the characterized identity as a traditional art, so that this adjustment process is actually an effort to rationalize traditional arts.

The growth and development of traditional art is one of the benchmarks that prove the existence of this art still exists. The development of form and function, technical aspects as well as the presentation is a transition in order to further strengthen its position as a heritage art to prevent it from extinction.

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