



The Symbolic Meaning of the Batara Munasiah Dance and Its Relevance to Generation Z Characters in South Sulawesi

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Abstract

The aim of this research is firstly to analyze and explain in a complex way the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth contained in the Batara dance and secondly, namely the relevance of the Batara dance to the character of Generation Z in South Sulawesi. The research method used is qualitative from the perspective of Roland Barthes' Semiotics theory. The data collected also used a participatory observation process, structured interviews unstructured interviews, and content analysis which still has a connection and relationship with a dance performance, especially the Batara Munasiah dance. The results of the research explain the explanation of the meaning contained in the Batara Munasiah Dance performance in terms of denotation, connotation, and myth. Explaining the Batara dance starts from the history of the development of the Batara dance itself to its relationship and relevance to the character of Generation Z in South Sulawesi. As for the meaning contained in the Batara dance, as follows: (1) a feeling of gratitude towards God Almighty, (2) happiness when given a good life, (3) the process of approaching oneself with God Almighty, nature, and the social environment around (4) Respect for oneself/self-control in behavior and relationships, (5) respect for elders, (6) always involve God Almighty in all our activities both when starting and finishing them. The second covers a relationship or relevance to the lifestyle of Generation Z today: (1) Forms of worship of God Almighty, (2) Forms of socializing with the environment and surrounding community, (3) Maintaining the values of ancestors that are still relevant. and provide a positive reflection of life, (4) Always pray and hope only in God Almighty, (5) a simple lifestyle and character is a good thing.

Keywords: *Batara Dance; Generation Z; Symbolic Meaning; Character*

Introduction

The people of South Sulawesi are often categorized into two groups, namely coastal communities and mountain communities. Both types of society have their characteristics. The characteristic inherent in coastal communities is their style and lifestyle which is more open to accepting culture that comes from outside. For example, in terms of food, art forms, traditional ceremonies, and language of communication. The ease with which foreign cultures can enter coastal communities is supported by access to these communities which is easier for immigrants to reach. Meanwhile, mountain communities tend to be more closed in various aspects of their lives, such as rigid traditional ceremonies with a long duration of

implementation, accompanied by offerings or sacrifices and the slaughter of certain animals which are mandatory and binding.

Communities in mountainous areas are difficult for immigrants to reach. They also have myths about curses or things that are negative. Anyone who enters mountainous areas or forests that are considered sacred will receive a curse. This is what is likely to cause the culture of mountain communities to be more static and seem monotonous. The art form created by the community is a process of imitating nature or a process of depicting the nature where the community lives so that the art form of the community, both coastal communities and mountain communities, is a depiction of culture and wisdom local area (the area where they live and settle).

In social life, mountain communities and coastal communities creatures remain the same and will respond to everything that comes in the environment around them, whether new people, new cultures, and others. These two forms of society also mostly live in the city center or district. Life is difficult to distinguish between coastal communities and mountain communities because they have developed by the demands of a more advanced and realistic urban lifestyle regarding current conditions. The combination of these two societies gave birth to a culture of thinking that was more modern and advanced in culture from various aspects, both in the form of livelihoods, forms of art, language, and others. This is what gave birth to the mindset of city people and is known as Generation Z, which was mainly born in the 2000s, grew up and grew up in the city center.

In the 2000s, generation Z, which dominated the lifestyle of young people, thought that normative forms of art were a form of art that was left behind. The arts that are dominantly preferred are forms that come from cultures outside Indonesia which are more energetic, open, and free in certain respects. They do not pay much attention to their original local art forms, perhaps the reason is because these art forms appear too often or are simply unable to compete with the art forms that have come. Especially in responding to local dances, they pay little attention. Although there are still a handful of Generation Z people today who like local, and regional art forms and ultimately those who feel interested and like this art form choose the academic route to be able to study art and the Generation Z group who do not pay attention will leave it and choose to continue to like the form. outdoor art. In practice, it could be influenced by the era of modernization which is spreading more foreign art forms that may be more favored by Generation Z in appearance and technical performance.

There are so many dances in South Sulawesi ranging from traditional folk, classical royal, social, worship of ancestral spirits as well as new creative dance forms that still depart from the standards and values typical of South Sulawesi such as Kalompoang dance, Batara dance, Paduppa dance, Madupa Bosara dance, Tomassenga dance, Pakbekenna Makjina dance, Patoeng dance, Pajonga dance and so on. However, what is most distinctive about South Sulawesi is the dance culture of the four ethnic groups representing the ethnic groups, namely Makassar, Bugis, Mandar, and Toraja, each of which has its distinctive dance, namely the Pabecause dance for the Makassar ethnic group, the Pajoge and Pajaga dance for the Bugis ethnic group, and the Patuddu dance for the Mandar ethnic group and Pagellu dance for Toraja ethnic group.

Batara Dance is a form of dance that reflects the style and lifestyle of the people in South Sulawesi, such as politeness, respect for guests, praying to God Almighty, mutual respect, and good cooperation and these are all life values that are starting to be eroded over time. among young people who now spend more time with things that are useless and do not have a positive impact as is reflected in today's era with all forms of interaction with Generation Z.

Batara Dance as one of the Makassar ethnic dances from South Sulawesi is rarely researched and rarely discussed in performing arts discussion groups, therefore the author considers that this dance has many values and is a symbol of a good life because it is important to explain and implement these values. contained in this dance, especially for Generation Z in South Sulawesi who have begun to abandon the

values and philosophy of life of the Bugis-Makassar community, namely *Siri' na Pacce*. *Batara Dance* is a form of dance that can be said to be a manifestation of the value of *spirit na pace* which is firmly held in the lives of the people of South Sulawesi by looking at the current conditions of the generation which is the benchmark for culture, whether it will live long or even become extinct, so it would be a shame if this dance was lost. It is not even taught in educational units until it reaches the university level.

Research related to art was studied by Ratih Kurnia Hidayati. 2016. The meaning of the *Bajidor Kahot* dance in terms of Roland Barthes' Semiotic theory. *Journal. Jakarta Arts Institute (IKJ), DKI Jakarta*. This research discusses the meanings contained in the use of dance costumes, in the song lyrics that accompany the dance, and the meaning of eroticism that is synonymous with the *Bajidor Kahot* dance. In his study, he explains a lot about bodily morphology and body shapes that are displayed on the performance stage with an interpretive approach in the study of Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. Apart from semiotic theory, this research also uses non-verbal communication theory and dance/choreography studies.

Apart from that by Fifie Febriyanti Sukman. 2014. The symbolic meaning of the *Paolle Dance* in the *Akkawaru Ceremony* in Gantarangkeke District, Bantaeng Regency, South Sulawesi. Thesis. Yogyakarta Indonesian Art Institute (ISI), DI Yogyakarta. This research study uses semiotics by Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Peirce with an ethical and emic approach, and qualitative research methods and discusses the choreographic meaning of the *Paolle* dance which is performed in *Akkawaru* traditional events. In general, this study discusses the dance itself and all supporting elements. in it such as the musical accompaniment, costumes and accessories used, make-up, floor patterns used in the performance, and the shape of the building used in performing this dance.

Research Methodology

This type of research is qualitative description. In other words, it can also be said that qualitative research is a step or research that describes an object in detail and complexly and tends to use inductive analysis. The data collection techniques that will be used in this research are observation and interviews. Data was collected using various methods before being compiled into a single data set, then revealing the symbolic meaning of the *Batara Munasiah* dance through movement, accompaniment, and everything related to the existence and existence of this *Batara* dance. The data analysis techniques used are data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Discussion

1. *Batara Dance* in Ritual Ceremonies

At the beginning of the creation of this dance, the choreographer said directly that this dance was often performed in several traditional Makassar ethnic parties, which were often performed in the middle of activities or at the end of ceremonial activities. Because it is still considered closely related to the mode of conveying messages from the people of the earth (*Botting Lino*) to the inhabitants of the sky (*Batarayya*), because the media used is exactly the same as the entire series of dances which are rite and sacred in the Makassar ethnic community, namely: the dancers must be girls (women who unmarried and not menstruating), cleanse yourself first before dancing (either by ablution or bathing), the accompaniment is praise to *Batarayya* (God) who were the musical accompaniment to the *Batara* dance is a typical Makassar classic song created by one of the Makassar Chinese *Peranakan* poets with the title "*Raja*" song (Thanksgiving to God).

The *Batara* dance is choreographically very different in its movement techniques from the classical dance techniques typical of the Makassar ethnic group, namely the *Padengan* dance. The *Batara*

dance is identical and close to the movement techniques of the coastal Makassar dance which is more dynamic and swinging. This is due to the cultural acculturation factor brought by Malay travelers. When the Batara Dance is performed in a ritual event, the dominant costume is *bajo bodo tokko'* (rigid) and a *lipa' sa'be cura' la'ba* sarong (large square motif woven sarong). This indicates that the costumes and uniforms adopt the costumes of the Padengan dance and the Salonreng dance which are often performed in traditional ceremonies which are predominantly ritual and sacred.

The Batara dance in traditional ceremonies usually appears during the *mappasunna'* ceremony, *mappadekko* ceremony, *mappalili* ceremony, *maccera ase* ceremony, namely these ceremonies are part of a series of life cycle ceremonies or ceremonies about farming and asking Batarayya for blessing and permission. The Batara dance is considered to be comparable to several sacred dances typical of the Makassar ethnic group, such as the Pabecausedong Lea-Lea dance, the Pabecause Samboritta dance, the Pabecause Sandro Beja dance, the Pabecause Iyo'le dance, and the Salonreng dance so that the performance could feature several types of Pabecause or dance. Another option is the Batara dance.

In the Makassar traditional ceremony (A'gaukang) several things must be prepared in carrying out the series of ceremonies, because if the components and equipment are not complete then the ceremony will not start and be carried out. In general, the equipment for carrying out a ceremony in the Makassar ethnic belief system (A'gaukang) is as follows:

a. *Apparuru* (Preparation)

Apparuru In the series of Makassar traditional ceremonies, it is defined as the process of preparing all the needs for the traditional ceremony to be held and prepared. In this case, the *apparuru* tries to provide all the components or materials and tools that will be used, both as performers or executors of the ceremony and all the binding ceremonial tools. In a public ceremony when entering the *apparuru* stage, in this case, the musician whose position and position is very vital will prepare himself and his group of musicians as well as the musical instruments that will be used to start the ceremony consisting of *gandang* (Makassar drum), *puik-puik* (typical Makassar flute) and *gong*. This *apparuru* collects all the traditional ceremonial necessities and puts them together on a carpet or mat as a symbol that these tools and materials are sacred things so they must be given a base and must not touch the floor directly because they will be offered to Batarayya (God) who is provide and regulate human life.

b. *Pakaramula Gio'* (Starting Activity)

In Makassar terms, *Pakaramula Gio'* is the next step after preparing everything in the initial stage, namely *apparuru*. *Pakaramula gio'* musicians will start chanting the mantra and start beating the *gandranga* with beats of the *tundrung paballe* as a symbol that the series of ceremonies will soon begin, at that moment the public is instructed to sit down and calmly follow the flow of this ceremony, if the ceremony being carried out is predominantly a ceremony of happiness or form Thank God, people will usually come to the ceremony point wearing clothes with a *lipa sa'be* (a typical Makassar sarong) and bringing various agricultural, and marine products and ready-to-eat food. Meanwhile, the family holding the ceremony or celebration will prepare ceremonial equipment in the form of offerings or what is usually called *jajjakkang*.

After the series of ceremonies is finished, it usually ends with a loose musical entertainment by the previous musician and sometimes the dance is performed at the end of the series of ceremonies, in this condition the Batara dance is sometimes performed as a substitute for the *Padenganjangang Lea-Lea* dance or the final form of *Padengan* dance entertainment which symbolizes the completion of the entire series. The ceremony which began after the performance was finished was closed with a meal together with all the people who attended the traditional ceremony.

2. Batara Dance in Entertainment Activities

The Batara dance, which he created in the past, was often performed in ceremonies of the Makassar ethnic community, has now been transformed into a profane or entertainment dance, which choreographically has also become lighter and more dynamic, very different from when it was originally created with bodily techniques and choreography that almost resemble Salonreng dance and Padengan dance. The development of this dance was definitely influenced by the people themselves who wanted this change to occur significantly and it was very much accepted among the people to this day. The current face of the dance is not the current face of the Batara dance, although the only thing that has changed is the tempo, but some fans of the previous Batara dance, are more dominant in wanting this dance to be performed again in the form in which it was originally created and the current generation predominantly prefers the Batara dance that was used in the past.

Now, if we look at the Batara dance choreography, we can see a combination of coastal Makassar dance techniques and mountain Makassar dance techniques. This symbolizes that the Batara dance adopts the lifestyle of Generation Z children. The lifestyle and behavior of Generation Z children reflect urban living behavior which may change according to the demands of the current era. This combination of living cultures occurs because life in urban areas is a life of acculturation between coastal and mountain community groups. Batara Dance depicts this model of life but still adheres to the belief in God Almighty.

3. Batara Dance as a Media for Character Formation

In general, we often think of the term character as an attitude or trait carried by each individual on earth since he was born. Whether the character can develop well or, on the contrary, it becomes a bad character, whether influenced by the individual himself or the individual's environment in which he lives and resides. In terms of psycho-social knowledge, the character education environment is closely related to the educational process that the individual will take in the future. This means that education is a form of intake that will direct a person or individual toward the desired dimensions of education. For example, if an individual studies a dimension of technological education, it is certain that his character will greatly influence the development of technology, both past and present technology, as well as future technology. Art becomes a form of scientific dimension that is built on the basis of knowledge of creating, responding to, and feeling surrounding phenomena which are expressed in the form of a work. Any work, one of which is a work of dance.

The art of dance is a medium for learning and character building for a person or individual who dominates the realm and dimensions of beauty, sensitivity, craftsmanship and creativity so that it can build and influence the process of personality formation. This personality is considered a characteristic or unique characteristic of a person and its formation is based on many things, for example family during childhood, as well as what a person is born with. (Sjarkawi, 2006). In this case, the Batara dance is considered still capable of providing a good reflection of life and in accordance with the life demands taught by Tumanurung ri Gowa.

Batara Dance has the ability to help shape the character of students who are in the circle of the Z generation group which dominates modern life today, reflected in the culture of life of ancient young people whose lives were very polite and orderly in living well with fellow humans. as well as with the natural surroundings. Batara dance, which is taught from an early age, is a representation of the importance of character formation through the art of dance using the medium of Batara dance which teaches gentleness, good manners, and belief in God. So why was the Batara dance chosen as a reference for character formation in the realm of formal education? Because the Batara dance is a new form of dance that is shorter, easier to learn and more interesting in terms of performance on stage when

compared to several types of classical dance typical of the Gowa kingdom. This indicates that the Batara dance is still interesting to perform on stage today.

4. Batara Dance as Profanary Performing Art

The birth of creative dance, which is often also called new dance or new creation, is a reflection of today's desire to be able to multiply and increase the wealth of dance reports in certain areas (Helena Bouvier, 2002: 196). In the history of Indonesian performing arts, it is said that performing arts and forms are one of the things that are most popular with Indonesian people, who basically like to be entertained and gather in squares or large fields. This form of art is something that will never be separated from the procession of Indonesian people's lives because every time they carry out any activity, Indonesian people will definitely hold some form of performance that can entertain both the organizers of the activity or ceremony and the guests who will attend the activity.

It is well known that the world of performing arts is increasingly developing into a form of commodity that is very much liked by almost all people in almost every part of the world. Because one of the needs of human life is the need for pleasure or the need for entertainment, one of which is performing arts entertainment which is very popular, especially by Indonesian people. Departing from a ritual today, it has now been shaped into a stage performance art that is far from rite and sacred anymore, so that its admirers and connoisseurs no longer only come from the generation X age group but have spread to the generation Z age group.

It must be admitted that the number of Indonesian performing arts enthusiasts when compared to the number of foreign performing arts enthusiasts must be admittedly outnumbered, because some groups in the Generation Z age group say that many Indonesian performing arts are very old-fashioned and outdated so it is difficult to win hearts in their eyes. today's young audience. Performing arts is now trying to change its face with new methods and models brought by young artists who are trying to think hard to attract the attention of generation Z so that they want and can like this Indonesian performing art. In the Indonesian people's favorite form of dance spectacle, it is the forms of performing arts that are attractive and exciting with shouts and shouts that welcome each other to become one. This is different from art forms originating from palaces or kingdoms which are far from festive and attractive.

The world of performing arts, which is now faced with creative economic arts, will attract the attention of generation Z, basically not interested in the art form but more interested in the income and practical benefits obtained from being involved in it. Batara Dance comes with a new composition model that is more dynamic and lively so that it is more acceptable to the public, especially the Z generation community, which is starting to show a waning interest in local performing arts and archipelago classics. Starting from that, Mrs. Munasiah Nadjamuddin reconstructed the Batara dance again so that it is more acceptable to today's society, but does not abandon the rules and forms that were arranged in such a way when the Batara dance was still used in ritual performing arts or in traditional ceremonies. Choreographers today are thinking about easier, lighter, and more unique performance models as well as performance models that are filled on stage with several supporting knick-knacks and interesting performance props.

Batara Dance is now a form of performing art that is growing rapidly in the realm of formal education because the choreography and accompanying instruments are easier and more dynamic than this new dance art model in South Sulawesi. The Batara dance in its new construction is often held at regional events, art competitions, and performing arts at schools and held by the community, indicating that the Batara dance already has its place inhabited by this group of Generation Z teenagers. It can be seen from the dancers who are predominantly young girls and the musicians who are predominantly young people from Generation Z. When compared to other choreographic models created by Bru, Batara Dance is clearly lighter and easier in terms of choreographic elements and musical accompaniment. This

is one of the reasons why Batara dance has become a form of profane performing art or entertainment today that still has its own charm.

Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded the Batara Munasiah dance performance is a performance whose values and meanings depict the cultural life of the people of South Sulawesi and its relationship with character among the Generation Z age group, which if used as a reference for learning media and character formation is still suitable for use in the realm of formal education. and informal. This is proven by the large number of Batara dances that have been implemented as extracurricular dances in schools in the South Sulawesi area and are predominantly taught to generation Z, which currently inhabits the largest number of people in the world. Learning based on local arts is a method of introducing local Indonesian wisdom forms in a more formal and binding form, so it is not wrong if the Batara Munasiah Dance was chosen to be taught to the Z generation in South Sulawesi.

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