PRESERVING MASK PERFORMING ARTS
THROUGH RITUAL IN BALI

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ABSTRACT

Mask art performance seems as a settlement or spiritual abode of the God in various manifestations. Through performances of mask art performance, the God who resides in the mask will protect the peoples from all disasters. Through keeping this tradition of mask art performance the divine blessing of the God will always around us.

1. Introduction

Bali is very rich in mask dance or performing arts by applying masks. Some example of performing art forms in which mask are prominently used, such as Berutuk, TopengPajegan, Barong and Rangda, Wayang Wong, and Barong Landung. In general, these types of performing arts act as a means of ritual those are treated sacredly by the people accordingly. Every village community usually has more than one mask dance performance (senipatopengan) as the divine symbols (sungsunganor sesuhunan) which are believed as the divine deity of human guardian. When these arts are performed, the community assumes that the divine deity of human guardian descends down to earth to bestow his powerful blessings and prosperity to all human kind. This belief has been around since long times ago, and has evolved hereditarily from one to another generation, and well treated by Balinese Hindu peoples up to this day.

The traditional Balinese people have philosophical life and uniqueness characteristics. Religion of Hindu which is adhered by most of Balinese people is a life force for preservation, development, and inheritance of almost all Balinese art forms. The Hindu religion teaches us three ways of practice to carry out the injunctions of God that are Tatwa, Susila and Upacara. Tatwais a philosophy of life that should be carried out unevenly such as Satyam (truth), Siwam (goodness), and Sundaram (beauty). Susilaproposes that in life human should deliver ethics and good behavior. Human kind requires interaction and understanding to create tolerance, peace, and harmony among society. Upacarais an expression of gratitude and respect upon God by way of performing yadnyaas a hearfelt presentation of ceremony or ritual. Yadnya is performed in many forms, from prayer with offering, working selflessly (ngayah), building a temple, and performing artistic activities. The practice of this yandnyaacan yield various kinds of activities and cultural products, for instance mask arts performance (Sugiartha, 2017: 2). Mask dance performance as one forms of yadnya, its ritual elements have been done since the day of mask making up to the day of performance.
2. Ritual Process of Mask Making

The mask making especially the sacred one has been through various ritual processes in each phase of mask processing. According to information of Mr. Cokorda Raka Tisnu (interview dated on February 17, 2017) a famous artist-mask maker in Bali, maskmaking is processed through five stages. These five stages are performed in order to produce a good quality mask both physically and aesthetically, and spiritually the mask was produced to swiftly gain taksu (inner power) spiritually.

First and foremost is the selection of the wood type. The wood types that are considered suitable for mask material are Pule wood, Kepuhwood and Jepun wood. These wood species are very strong and durable; grow in haunted or sacred places, such as graves, valleys or river banks that are considered to have magical values. Method to get this wood is quite unique; the trunk of the tree is partially gouged while the tree itself well survives. The method is called "ngepel". Wood taking is carried out only in certain day and time, such as midnight of kajengkliwon, full moon, and new moon (tilem). Villagers come together to the site of wood taking, begin with rendering offerings to the spirit of the wood that of asking permission to take some part of the wood as for main material of the mask, and followed by praying together.

Second, the nuntun ceremony or relocating the spirit of the wood for a while before the wood is being processed. In this ritual, offerings such as daksina and pejatiare prepared as the place for the spirit to reside temporarily. Daksina and pejati are then placed in mrajan or village shrine after the prayer. The wood that has spirit any longer in it then processed in banjar or is taken home by the artist to be made a mask.

Third, the stage of mask making begins with the stage of preservation by way of soaking the wood for 3-7 days to remove the sap or sagu from the wood. The wood is then dried for at least ten days before it is ready for work. The process of mask work is also begun by looking for a good day and give offerings in the form of santunpenyejer placed in merajan (shrine). The main purpose of this ceremony is to ensure that during the working process the artist is given the power of taksu so that the process could go smoothly. Maskwork is not carried out every day, but it depends on the artist’s inspiration. The artist will begin to work whenever the inspiration appears, always pray for the blessing from the sanghyangtaksu.

Fourth, ngodakinor coloring process. Mask that has been formed and carved need to be colored, this process is important because the coloring process will give life to the mask. The coloring process also begins with a prayer by renewing the offerings previously presented. After the prayer is done, the artist then begins coloring the mask with the paint that has been prepared before. Physically, the mask is considered done after the process of ngodakin.

The fifth stage is pasupati; the stage in which we ask the God in his manifestation as Sang Hyang Pasupati for the newly completed mask to be given a magical power. This stage always begins by searching for a good day for the pasupati ceremony, and then proceeded with offerings led by the priest. In this pasupati ritual the spirit that resides within the mask is chanted mantras recital by the priest. The owner of the mask participates in witnessing and praying for the
mask to hold a sympathetic magical power. Especially for the masks of Barong and Rangda, after the pasupati ceremony has have finished, towards midnight Barong and Rangda are paraded to the grave to perform ngerehang ritual. Ngerehang ritual is that the spirits in the Barong and Rangda become haunted or tenget.

3. Mask Dance Performance upon Ritual Presentation

Some types of mask dance performances that those performances are always associated with rituals are as follows. First, Topeng Berutuk in the Village of Trunyan. Peoples of Trunyan Village along sides Lake Batur, Regency of Bangli has a unique ritual with mask dance the biggest ritual

Sabha Gede Kapat Lanang ceremony, these native Balinese peoples perform a worship ceremony for their supreme god who known as Ratu Sakti Pancering Jagat and His consort Ratu Ayu Pingit Dalem Dasar. In the ceremony was staged a dance drama with the characters of a pair of masked creatures dressed in dried banana leaves and carrying a whip called the Berutuk. On the show tells the figure of male Berutuk who is personification of Ratu Sakti Pancering Jagat do scenes of romance with the figure of female Berutuk that is personification of Ratu Ayu Pingit Dalem Dasar. According to the peoples of Trunyan, the romantic story of these two Berutukis believed to bring welfare for society, usually after the ceremony is marked by the rain (Danandjaja, 1980: 402-407). That is why the Topeng Berutukis treated very sacredly by peoples of Trunyan and must be staged at the biggest ritual ceremony.
of Pujungan Village who are settled in the slopes of Mount Batukaru have Barong and Rangda that is sacredly placed in Pura Dalem of the village. Barong and Rangda is sacred and well maintained. Every six months precisely on Sunday wukukuningan Barong and Rangda are given a ceremony what so called piodalanduwe with offering and pray together. On certain days, such as temple ceremony in Pura Tri Kahyangan (Puseh, Desa, Dalem) Barong and Rangda are staged, on the feast of Galungan is held a ritual ngerebeg, Barong and Rangda are paraded around the village to eliminate disease outbreaks and disasters that hit the village. There is also something interesting that is the Barong and Rangda are also staged in the framework of the vow pay ritual. If a person experiences prolonged illness or suffers a loss in business, failures in achieving something, has no any babies for long times, the harvest has never in good manner, one often pronounces the promise "if it succeeds, someone will stage the Barong and Rangda at the village crossroad". When the appointment is fulfilled they perform a vow pay ritual by performing Barong and Rangda. In addition, when holding a three months ritual ceremony for the baby in Pujungan community also often staged Barong and Rangda to beg for protection so that babies grow healthy and safe from danger.

Third, Wayang Wong in Tejakula Village, Buleleng. The community of Tejakula Village located on the northeastern coast of Bali Island has a very sacred set of Wayang Wong. The masks of Wayang Wong of Tejakula are kept well in Pura Pemaksaan and staged ceremony on certain days. The show has always been associated with ceremonies or rituals at some of the great temples in the local village, such as Pura Puseh, Pura Desa, and Pura Dalem. Bandem (2004: 87) mentions that the masks of Tejakula's Wayang Wong are the gift from the King of Bangli to Pasek Dangka clan in the 18th century. Since it was given in the 18th century until now these masks are well preserved by the community by always staged in the great rituals of the local village. According to Pande Gede Mustika, an
artist from Tejakula Village, stated that Wayang Wong Tejakula is considered sacred because it is believed to have the spirit of the Gods who protect the community. That is why when Wayang Wong is staged the public watch with enthusiasm and full of respect, because it is considered the descent of the God, the protector of society.

Fourth, Topeng Pajegan. The term of pajegan is derived from the word pajeg which means to buy everything; this is in accordance with the context of the show that all the characters appear to be played by one person by changing the mask on each scene. In another context, according to mask artist I Ketut Kodi said pajegan comes from the word pejegjegan, which means to confirm, so the ritual will be successful because it has been confirmed by the show of Topeng Pajegan. The Topeng Pajegan is staged in various ceremonies, such as piodalan at the temple (dewayadnya), mecaru (bhutayadnya), tooth filing and marriage (manusayadnya), or even mediksa (rsiyadnya). The types of masks and figures played in Topeng Pajegan, the patih and the topengtua, penasar, the king (dalem), the bondres, and the dalem sidhakarya. Figures that last show, the dalem sidhakarya become the estuary of all the elements of the sacred Topeng Pajegan. Sidhakarya means success, meaning that with the appearance of topengsidhakarya means the ceremony is considered successful. In terms of character, dalem sidhakarya is a scary-faced mask, buckled teeth, narrow eyes, and white hair decomposes. The movements are agile and in the show act like a priest. In his appearance the sidakarya figures carrying yellow-colored rice and Chinese coins are sown in the stage area, then in front of the dance offerings recite the mantras for the purification of the universe and provide protection to mankind.

Fifth, Barong Landung. Barong Landung takes a form of a couple of large tall human doll. The male one call Jero Gede with the face is very scary, black-skinned, and narrow-eyed, while the Chinese-faced call Jero Luhhas white-skinned, narrow-eyed, round-shaped face. Just like the mask dance performance in general, Barong Landung is also treated sacredly by the community, usually acted as divine symbol in a community. The sympathetic magical element that Barong Landung possesses is believed to be able to protect the people from various disasters and diseases. For example Barong Landung in Banjar Pegambangan, Batubulan Village, Gianyar is treated sacredly by all people of the community. Barong Landung is usually staged in the Tri Kahyangan Jagat temples (Puseh, Desa, Dalem) at the local banjar because it is
considered as the embodiment of the Gods of protector in the community. At the sasihkaenem (the sixth month of the Balinese calendar), BarongLandung is staged at the perempatanagung (cross road) of the village to block negative influences. This is related to the myth of the people from Southern Bali that believe in the sasihkaenem in Bali will appear various diseases spread by RatuGedeMecaling from Nusa Penida Island. To prevent the entire plague outbreak, the community performs a repellent ritual. Various forms of ceremony carried out by the community, especially BanjarPegambangan peoples perform BarongLandung show. By way of BarongLandung performances along with offerings from the community, they believe they will be safe from the plague.

4. Conclusion
It can be concluded that the ritual is very powerful as a means of maintenance and inheritance of mask art performance in Bali. Balinese people believe that through the media of mask art performance they are able to communicate with the God. Mask as the main means of mask art performance is seen as a settlement or spiritual abode of the God in various manifestations. Through performances of mask art performance on every ritual Balinese people believe that God who resides in the mask will protect the peoples from all disasters so that the peoples are also obliged to care for these maskswell. This is why the mask art until now are very well preserved with various forms such as Berutuk, Barong, Rangda, TopengPajegan, Wayang Wong, and Barong Landung. In terms of ritual, mask art performance acts as a medium of offerings, marked by symbolic expression and contain a meaning to glorify God’s greatness. By that way the artist and the public feel the pleasure, peace, and comfort on the other hand the forms of art become well preserved.

REFERENCES


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