



An Analysis of the Characteristics of Balinese Costume

- Focus on the *Legong* Dance Costume -

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ABSTRACT

Traditional costume in Indonesia represents identity of a person and it displays the origin and the status of the person. Where culture and religion are fused, the traditional costume serves one of the most functions in rituals in Bali. This research aims to analyze the characteristics of Balinese costumes by focusing on the *Legong* dance costume. Quantitative research was performed using 332 images of Indonesian costumes and 210 images of Balinese ceremonial costumes. Qualitative research was performed by doing field research in Puri Saba, Gianyar and SMKN 3 SUKAWATI(Traditional Art Middle School). The paper illustrates the influence and structure of Indonesian traditional costume. As the result, focusing on the upper wear costume showed that the ancient era costumes were influenced by animism. They consist of tube(*kemben*), shawl(*syah*), corset, dress(*terusan*), body painting and tattoo, jewelry(*perhiasan*), and cross. The Modern era, which was shaped by religion, consists of *baju kurung*(tunic) and *kebaya*(kaftan). The Balinese costume consists of the costume of participants and the costume of performers. Bali dancing is grouped into *Wali* dance(sacred), *Bebali* dance(theatrical), and *Balih-balihan* dance(entertainment). The *Legong* dance is included in the *Balih-balihan* dance, and its costume developed from 1920 until present. The characteristics of *Legong* dance costumes are 'Theatrical,' 'Angelic,' 'Charming,' and 'Decorative.' In conclusion, the balance of religion, culture, and art gives a unique trait in Bali. The Balinese social system, which is based on Hinduism, has influenced art and its function. This relationship creates a strong structure to the Balinese ceremonial costume, especially the *Legong* dance costume.

Key words: Balinese costume(발리 전통 의상), characteristics(특징),
Indonesian traditional costume(인도네시아 전통 의상),
Legong dance costume(레공 댄스 의상), spirituality(영성)

I. Introduction

Indonesia is a country with diverse ethnic groups and traditional costume. Located in a tropical archipelago, the traditional costumes of Indonesia are diverse, but share the common characteristic of being long cloths. In humid regions, a bare chest for the women is natural. However, in mountain areas, shawls and wrappings are used to cover the upper part to protect them from heat and coolness. In addition to the ethnic groups' traditional clothes, Indonesia has its national costume, called the *Kebaya*.

Indonesian costumes' material sources are drawn from its own natural resources. The first upper wear of Indonesian was believed to be the barkcloth. In fact, most tropical regions in the world use Barkcloth(Aragon, 1990). Under influence from other cultures, the Barkcloth is then replaced by weaved cloths. These weaved cloths were then used as a wrapped garments for daily and ceremonial wear. Weaved cloths lead to several methods of dressing, as it is constructable.

The unique society there practices the Hindu religion with the assimilation of their old animism in Bali. During a feast in Bali, the appreciation to the gods is expressed by performing music and dances. These performances are held not only to entertain, but also to show the skills of the performers and cultivate their pride and social prestige(Covarrubias, 1937). As a part of a ceremony, dances are taught from a young age to be performed as a representation of their village. The Legong dance is considered the basic dance for maidens(Oral Statement Interview by Saba, July 8, 2015) and is learnt by every young Balinese woman. As an important aspect

in Balinese life, the *Legong* dance costume is theatrical and captures the elegant and extravagant movement of the dance.

The literature review shows that previous researchers analyzed the history of ancient textile techniques and their relationship with religion and culture. Similarly, this paper analyzes the characteristics of Balinese dance costume through Indonesian traditional costume and the relationship between clothing, religion, and culture. Aragon(1990) observed the history of barkcloth from Celebes. Barkcloth is one of the oldest cloths in Indonesia and throughout tropical regions in the world. Aragon's paper explains the process of making, characteristics, and meaning of the textile. In addition, that paper clarifies why the technique became extinct. In terms of the *Legong* dance, Darsana(2007)'s paper explains the importance of traditional costume related to Hinduism. Davies(2012) discusses the relation between beauty, youth, and the Balinese *Legong* dance. The paper presents how Balinese recognize beauty and the importance of youth in the *Legong* dance. The relevance of beauty and culture in Bali is strong, and beauty is considered to go beyond the physical appearance. The analysis of Davies(2012) paper inspired the concept of beauty in this collection.

This research aims to analyze the characteristics of Balinese costume focusing on the *Legong* dance costume. The questions of this research are as follows: firstly, what are the influences and structures of Indonesian costumes? Secondly, what are the design features of the Balinese costumes? Lastly, what are the characteristics of the *Legong* dance costume?

It is known from the history that Indonesian

costume structure consists of upper wear, skirt, tattoos, and accessories. However, this paper focus on the upper wear of Indonesian traditional costume for the reason that it has more diverse design structure compared with the skirt construction. Balinese traditional costumes are examined as a representation of Indonesian costume. Through history and due to the importance of religion in Balinese life, the costumes are created and used with deep philosophy. Accordingly, the focal point of this paper is to analyze the *Legong* dance(an entertainment dance) costume from Bali. To analyze the topic, it is important to analyze Balinese clothing as a whole. Quantitative research is based on 332 images of Indonesian costumes and 210 images of Balinese ceremonial costumes taken from the previous researches, world wide web, and field research. The field research was performed from 3 to 11 July, 2015; 17 to 23 January, 2016; and 24 June to 4 July, 2016, in Puri Saba, Gianyar, and SMKN 3 SUKAWATI(Traditional Art Middle School). Oral statement interview of the *Legong* dancer is also included.

II. Structure, Influence, and Development of Indonesian Traditional Costume

Indonesian traditional costumes are diverse. Each region has its own traditional costume. The varied costumes of Indonesia are analyzed here based on their influence and structure. As mentioned above, this focuses on the upper wear style of Indonesian traditional costume.

1. Structure and Influence

Indonesia is a multi-ethnicity country with diverse costumes. The original Indonesian costume structures are based on the local animism that associated region practices. These religions made regulations on how to cover a person and ascribed meanings to these garments. Basic Indonesian traditional costume consist of upper wear, skirt, one piece, headdress(for females), and accessories. Each region creates their own style based on their environment and beliefs.

Indonesian culture is shaped by local customs and foreign influence. The archipelago was known as a meeting point for merchants from around the world. Sellers from China, India, the Middle East, and Western countries gather there and, unintentionally, influenced the structure of some Indonesian costumes. These foreign cultures and religions apply to the regions that are most closely involved with the trading. For the regions remote from the trading areas, their traditional costumes are preserved.

2. Upper Wear Structure

In some regions in Indonesia, bare chests are natural due to climate. However, during ceremonial events, body covering is done to respect gods or ancestors. Upper-wear structure in Indonesia is rich in style. The differences and development of the costumes could be seen through period and regions. This paper divides the period between the ancient era and modern era in this part<Table 1>.

1) Ancient Era: Fundamental Belief

Costumes in the ancient era are a part of lo-

cal custom. The coverings of the body and ways to cover the self were based on societies' beliefs. Upper wear in the ancient era is categorized as tube, shawl, corset, one-piece, body painting and tattoo, jewelry, and cross. The Indonesian words are mentioned in italic.

The tube (*kemben*) consists of one piece of cloth that is wrapped along the chest, leaving the shoulders bare (Fig. 1, 2). It was used as a costume during ceremonial events and separating social status in daily wear. The shawl (*syal*) consists of one piece of cloth that is wrapped to cover the chest and shoulders (Fig. 3, 4). This is commonly used to protect the body from heat and cold. The corset is found in Borneo and is made by rattan, referred to as the *Rawai Lama* (Fig. 5, 6). It was used for ceremonial events and to distinguish the age of a woman. One piece of cloth (*terusan*) covers from the chest down to the feet (Fig. 7, 8). It was used both as an everyday costume and ceremonial costume. Tattoos are used in Mentawai, Borneo, to describe and give meaning to a person (Fig. 9). Body painting in Irian Jaya is used in ceremonial events (Fig. 10). Jewelry was made to celebrate and represent beauty to god. Jewelry was made of shells, bones, feathers, beads, and flowers (Fig. 11, 12). Cross cloth is wrapped over the chest in opposite lines, creating an 'X' figure. This type is used for ceremonial events only (Fig. 13, 14).














2) Modern Era: Religion Influence





Modern era costumes are the result of religious influence. Ancient costumes came to be considered as backwards and clothes sewn by machines treated as superior. Upper wear in the

modern era is grouped into the *kebaya* and tunic (*Baju Kurung*). The *kebaya* was influenced by the traders from China, the Middle East, and Portugal. *Kebaya's* structure is a fit upper wear with a full opening in front (Fig. 15, 16). This type of clothing is divided into the Indonesian *kebaya*, Chinese *kebaya* (*kebaya encim*), and Dutch *kebaya* (*kebaya Belanda*). The *kebaya* was a part of a social status and politic during the colonization by the Dutch. The costume is worn by three different ethnic groups with different structures, allowing the Dutch to easily identify a person's ethnic grouping (Lukman, Piliang, & Sunarto, 2013). The Indonesian *Kebaya* consists of a simple long-sleeve blouse that covers from the neck to the knee with a sarong. The *Kebaya Encim*, worn by the Chinese woman, imitates the white color seen on the Dutch *Kebaya*, even though white in Chinese culture describes death. The *Kebaya Encim* was redesigned based on the Chinese *qipao* collar and embroidery. The *Dutch Kebaya* is a redesigned Indonesian *Kebaya* that is made with luxurious lace, white cotton, and silk, with colorful sarongs. The Dutch *Kebaya* appears with shorter sleeves.

The tunic style was influenced by Malay clothing (Fig. 17, 18). This upper wear was influenced by the Arabian and Indian traders and identical with garments seen in the Islam religion. The shape of the tunic blouse is an oversized top with a small slit at the neck. The purpose of this clothing is to cover the whole body based on Islamic teaching. The tunic is used for daily wear, formal, and ceremonial costumes.

<Table 1> Structure of the Upper Wear of Indonesian Traditional Costume

Era / Characteristics	Structure			
	Tube(<i>Kemben</i>)		Shawl(<i>Syal</i>)	
Ancient				
	<Fig. 1> Sumba in <i>Lau</i> Cloth (yetsin-tamuama, 2013)	<Fig. 2> <i>Baju Agung</i> Bali (Commons, 2009)	<Fig. 3> Queen of <i>Buleleng</i> , Bali (Commons, 2009)	<Fig. 4> <i>Aceh</i> Costume (Kaskus, 2009)
	Feminine, Elegant, Pure		Feminine, Elegant, Pure	
	Corset(<i>Rawai Lama</i>)		One Piece(<i>Terusan</i>)	
				
	<Fig. 5> <i>Rawai Lama</i> (Wikipedia, n.d.)	<Fig. 6> <i>Rawai Lama</i> , Borneo (Pinterest, n.d.)	<Fig. 7> <i>Ulos</i> Wrap (Karosiadi, 2010)	<Fig. 8> Java <i>Batik</i> Wrap (Gpedia, 2009)
	Strong, Decorative, Feminine		Feminine, Elegant, Classy	
	Body Painting and Tattoo(<i>Titi</i>)		Jewelry(<i>Perhiasan</i>)	
				
	<Fig. 9> <i>Titi</i> Tattoo <i>Mentawai</i> (Ethnic-mentawai, 2012)	<Fig. 10> <i>Dani</i> Woman Tribe (Lenterapapubarat, 2014)	<Fig. 11> Irian Jaya Accessories (Pinterest, n.d.)	<Fig. 12> <i>Mentawai</i> Accessories (News, 2008)
	Decorative, Strong, Pure		Feminine, Decorative, Strong	
	Cross(<i>Selampai</i>)			
				
	<Fig. 13> Javanese Mask Dancers (Kancamaya, 2015)		<Fig. 14> <i>Dayak Iban Selampai</i> (Pinterest, n.d.)	
Elegant, Decorative, Strong		Feminine, Decorative, Pure		

	Kaftan (<i>Kebaya</i>)		Tunic (<i>Baju Kurung</i>)	
Modern				
	<Fig. 15> <i>Kebaya Keraton</i> (Commons, 2009.)	<Fig. 16> <i>Kebaya Jawa</i> (Pinterest, n.d.)	<Fig. 17> <i>Baju Batabue Minangkabau</i> (Pinterest, n.d.)	<Fig. 18> <i>Baju Bodo Celebes</i> (Wikipedia, 2009)
	Feminine, Elegant, Classy		Feminine, Elegant, Decorative	

(Table by researchers, 2017)

III. History and Characteristics of the Balinese Costume

Balinese costume is constructed based on Hindu *Dharma* teaching. Balinese costume is influenced by the philosophy of 『*Tri Angga*』. 『*Tri*』 means ‘three’ and 『*Angga*』 means ‘body.’ First, the 『*Utama Angga*』 is the holy part represented by the head. Second, the 『*Madya Angga*』 is from the neck down to the torso. Lastly, the 『*Nista Angga*』 is the lowest part, described as from the navel down to the feet. This is why Balinese are obligated to cover the lower part using an item called a *kamben* (wrap skirt form a long cloth). The characteristics can be analyzed through the history of Balinese costume. This chapter focuses on Balinese ceremonial dance costume.

1. Historical Background

Balinese costume consists of daily wear and ceremonial wear. Daily wear is more simple and practical than the ceremonial wear. Before the

colonization by the Dutch, it was common to leave the upper waist nude and to cover it only during ceremonies or when entering a temple.

In 1912, a German doctor, Gregor Krause, captured the Balinese situation and photographed it as an exotic place where women were pictured topless. According to Covarrubias (1937), the Balinese were portrayed as a ‘charming primitive people unconcerned with clothes.’ During the colonization by the Dutch from 1910, Balinese women were slowly forced to use a blouse ‘to protect the morals of the Dutch soldiers’ (Covarrubias, 1937). The blouse was similar with the Javanese blouse they called *baju*. Only the rich and high-status people could afford more than one blouse. For this reason, the lower caste used the same blouse repeatedly, resulting in them looking dirty (Covarrubias, 1937). However, the fact is, Balinese splurge on their ceremonial costumes using the best materials, such as cotton, silk, and gold.

In modern days, westernized clothing is popular for daily wear, such as t-shirts, dresses, jeans, and trousers. Nevertheless, alongside this

modern influence, the ceremonial costume is preserved by its own original form due to its strong religious influence.

2. Characteristics of the Balinese Ceremonial Costume

Balinese Ceremonial costumes are elaborate and festive. The costume shows their gratitude and worship to god. Therefore, the head and chest are covered. The role of a person in the ceremony can be distinguish based on their appearance and costume. This chapter focuses on ceremonial costume based on the participants' <Table 2> and performers' costumes.

1) Costume of Participants

Balinese participants' costumes are worn by the congregation. This costume is similar with the king's and queen's costume, referred to as the Great Costume(*Baju Agung*)<Fig. 19, 20, 21>. This elaborate costume is filled with gold patterns and is also worn in tooth filing(*meta-tah*) performances and wedding ceremonies. The






most important item is the headdress(*gelungan*), which looks like a crown filled with real gold and flowers. They also use gold plugs piercing in their ears. Next, the breast cover binds the chest and long skirt(*kamen*), with the under skirt(*ta-pih*) binding the hips. A long thin belt(*sabuk*) wraps the waist and covers part of the breast and skirt.

In modern days, the participants' costumes are more practical and simple by wearing a *kebaya* blouse made by lace and a long wrapped traditional skirt <Fig. 22>. In addition, a sash belt is tied at the waist <Fig. 23>. The Dutch brought the Javanese *Kebaya* to Bali in order to differentiate the race of each ethnic group(Lukman, Piliang, & Sunarto, 2013). The *Kebaya* then acculturated. For example, the usage of the sash around the waist was similar with their local costume.

2) Costume of Performers

Performers in a ceremony include the priest, dancers, and music performers. These persons are carefully selected and respected by the

<Table 2> Characteristics of the Balinese Ceremonial Costume

The Great Costume(<i>Baju Agung</i>)			Balinese <i>Kebaya</i>	
				
<Fig. 19> Ceremonial Costume 1910 (Allisaindotour, n.d.)	<Fig. 20> Ceremonial Costume 1920s (Pinterest, n.d.)	<Fig. 21> Ceremonial Costume 1930s (Pinterest, n.d.)	<Fig. 22> Balinese <i>Kebaya</i> 1943 (Commons, 2009)	<Fig. 23> Modern Balinese <i>Kebaya</i> (Kebayamodis, n.d)
Feminine, Spiritual, Pure			Feminine, Pure, Decorative	

(Table by researchers, 2017)

society. In Bali, dance is not only a stage of art. It is a way to appreciate and worship god's blessing and kindness (Suardana, 2012). The dance is performed as an opening and welcoming ceremony for the deities and ancestors to purify the temple or during the cremation (*ngaben*) ceremony (Suardana, 2012). The dance is also a way to educate the locals because social content are embedded inside the dance's story. Balinese dance is inspired by nature, from the eye movement, dancing fingers, and body structure. The dance is always accompanied by gamelan instruments. Gamelan is an ensemble of instruments. The Gamelan player wears an *udeng* as the headpiece (for males) safari shirt, long skirt (*kamen*), outer skirt cover (*saput*), and a stole (*anteng*) inside the safari shirt.

Dancers' costumes consist of makeup, head-dress, clothing, and accessories. The makeup will show what character the dancer is, whether she is a bad (*keras*) or good (*alus*) character. The headdress is also a main item for dancing. The main textile for the costumes, *Prada*, is made by the technique of creating a pattern by applying gold leaf on the cloth. Dance costumes will be analyzed in detail in the next chapter.

IV. Analysis of the Balinese Dance Costume and the *Legong* Dance Costume

The unique society practices Hindu religion with the assimilation of their old animism in Bali. The Balinese believed that it was necessary to create a communal co-operation to establish an outstanding festival to fulfil their religious needs (Covarrubias, 1937). During a feast in Bali,

the appreciation to the god is done by performing music and dances. These performances are held not only to entertain, but also to show their skills and receive pride and social prestige (Covarrubias, 1937). As a part of a ceremony, dances are taught from a young age to perform as a representation of their village. The *Legong* dance is considered the basic dance for maidens (Oral statement interview by Saba, July 8, 2015) and are learnt by every young Balinese woman. As an important aspect in Balinese life, the *Legong* dance costume captures the elegant and extravagant movement.

This chapter discusses the classification of Balinese dance costumes, focusing on the *Legong* dance costumes. The *Legong* dance costumes are analyzed based on their development and design characteristics. This paper choose to focus on the *Legong* dance costume for the reason that the costume structure is different compared to other dance costumes. The most significant difference is *Prada* shirt underneath the breast cover.

1. Classification of the Balinese Dance Costume

In ceremonies and temple festivals, the opening ceremony is performed by dance. Balinese dances are classified based on their function. They include the *Wali* dances, *Bebali* dances, and *Balih-balihan* dances (Table 3).

1) *Wali* Dance: Sacred

Based on sacredness, the *Wali* dances are the most important dance. Performed before a ceremony, the *Wali* dance welcomes the deities and ancestors. It also purifies the temple where the ceremony is held. Included in this group are the

Rejang, *Baris*, *Pendet*, and *Sanghyang Dedari* dances.

The *Rejang* dance is performed all over the island to ensure that the island will not lose its 'purity.' Performed by maidens or postmenopausal mothers, the costume consists of a dried palm headdress, stacked to imitate an offering. The body is wrapped with a long narrow *Prada* belt with a *Prada* inner skirt (*tapih*) and white outer skirt (*kamben*). The dominant yellow and white color represent sacredness and life (Fig. 25). The *Baris* dance depicts the manhood of Balinese warriors (Suardana, 2012). The costume consists of layered beaded stripes (*awiran*) and a headdress shaped as a pyramid. The wrist and ankle of the dancer are decorated with *Prada* cloth. The costume appears to be strong and big (Fig. 25). The *Pendet* dance costume uses a traditional Bali costume that consist of a wrapped *Prada* belt, from one shoulder, over the chest, covering the torso, combined with an outer skirt made of *Prada* cloth, a headdress of frangipani and golden flowers, and with the dancer holding a bowl decorated with dried palm leaves filled with flowers (Fig. 26). The *Sanghyang Dedari* dance is only performed by young girls. The costume consists of a wrapped *Prada* belt around the upper body, with a *Prada* skirt, and a white belt wrapped around the torso. The costume is dominated by the color yellow, again implying sacredness (*tenget*) (Fig. 27).

The *Wali* dances are performed by virgin maidens, in exception of the *Baris* dance. The costumes' characteristics reflect the pure and angelic with the addition of the spiritual, decorative, and theatrical.

2) *Bebali* Dance: Theatrical

Bebali Dances are a mixture of what is sacred and entertaining. The theatrical drama narrates the story of the Balinese kingdom in a mixture of the art of sound, theater, dance, and literature. The *Gambuh* dance is included in this group. The classical Balinese drama consists of several figures. The costume of the *Gambuh* dance shows the characteristics of the decorative, theatrical, festive, and magnificent (Fig. 28).

3) *Balih-Balihan* Dance: Entertainment

The *Balih-balihan* dance genre is entertainment. The purpose of the dances is to entertain during a ceremony, and could be done anytime without restriction. This type of dance could be danced for attracting tourists. Included in this group are the *Kebyar*, *Janger*, *Legong*, *Topeng*, and *Kecak* dances.

The *Kebyar* dance is a solo expressive dance. The dancer connects his mind and body with the music, and practices without a consistent dance routine. The costume consists of a wrapped *Prada* belt around the body with a long wrapped *Prada* cloth that goes between the legs of the dancer, creating a train of cloth. The accessories include the *Badong Kain*, a circular breast cover used like a necklace, and headpiece called the *Udeng* (Fig. 29). The *Janger* dance is a social dance that shows friendship among Balinese youths. Danced by sixteen youths, the dancers wear a set of costumes consisting of a wrapped *Prada* belt on the body, a *kamben Prada*, two long cloths attached on each side of the torso, and a headdress shaped as a triangle with decorative beads and gold leaf (Fig. 30). There are different sources purported for the

<Table 3> Classification and Characteristic of the Balinese Dance Costume

Classification	Characteristic			
<p>Wali Dance: Purifies temple and welcoming deities and ancestors</p>				
	<p><Fig. 24> <i>Renjang</i> Dance (sanggartaribaliqiart, 2013)</p> <p>Spiritual, Pure, Angelic</p>	<p><Fig. 25> <i>Baris</i> Dance (wikipedia, 2014)</p> <p>Decorative, Theatrical, Strong</p>	<p><Fig. 26> <i>Pendet</i> Dance (lovebalinese, 2014)</p> <p>Decorative, Pure, Angelic</p>	<p><Fig. 27> <i>Sanghyang Dedari</i> Dance (magnificentbali, n.d.)</p> <p>Spiritual, Pure, Angelic</p>
<p>Bebali Dance: Classic Balinese theatrical drama</p>				
	<p><Fig. 28> <i>Gambuh</i> Dance (Skipdmaloo, n.d.)</p> <p>Decorative, Theatrical, Festive, Magnificent</p>			

Balih-Balihan
Dance:
Entertainment
dance



<Fig. 29>
Kebyar Dance
(Photographed by
researcher, 2016)

Decorative, Theatrical,
Festive



<Fig. 30>
Janger Dance
(fabulousbud, n.d.)

Decorative, Theatrical, Festiv.



<Fig. 31>
Legong Dance
(Photographed by
researcher, 2016)

Theatrical, Angelic, Festive,
Pure



<Fig. 32>
Topeng Dance
(Photographed by
researcher, 2016)

Decorative, Spiritual,
Theatrical



<Fig. 33>
Kecak Dance
(Photographed by
researcher, 2016)

Spiritual, Theatrical, Pride

(Table by researchers, 2017)

legend of the *Legong* dance, the best-known being that it came from the dream of a king. It was told that the king I(/ee/) Dewa Agung Made Karna had a vision of dancing celestial maidens (Dibia & Ballinger, 2004). This dream later became the beginning of the *Legong* dance routine. The costume consists of a *Prada* shirt, *Prada* belt wrapped across the torso, *Prada* skirt, a head piece, and accessories (Fig. 31). More information regarding the *Legong* dance costume is discussed in the next sub-chapter. The *Topeng* (mask) dance is performed with dance, dialogue, and music. The dance costume consists of a mask, shirt, layers of beaded stripes on the shoulder, and a wrapped *Prada* cloth from the chest to the knee. Underneath, the dancer uses pants and under skirt wrapped on the waist (Fig. 32). Lastly, the *Kecak* dance is a performing art of the story of *Ramayana*. The performers wear *Poleng* (black and white checkered cloth that signifies guardian) wrapped on their waists and covering half of their thighs (Fig. 33). The dancers are bare-chested.

Balih-balihan dance costumes are more theatrical, decorative, and festive than other types. The characteristics align well with the purpose of the dance classification, to entertain the audience.

2. Development and Design Characteristics of the *Legong* Dance Costume

The *Legong* dance costume is a unique combination of *Prada* [*pra-deu*] cloths (the technique of creating a pattern by applying gold leaf on the cloth,) and elaborate accessories, especially the headdress. The characteristics are seen through the development of the *Legong* dance costume and its design characteristics. Compared to other

Balinese woman dance costumes, only the *Legong* dance covers the upper body with *Prada* shirt. The reason is, the shirt absorbs the sweat of the dancers for propriety's sake (Oral Statement Interview by Saba, July 8, 2015). By covering the upper body, the costume shows the elegance, modesty, and purity of the dancers.

1) Historical Background

The *Legong* dance was recorded in the *Babad Dalem Sukawati* (a genealogical chronical of the court of Sukawati) to be created in 1811 (Dibia & Ballinger, 2004). The dance has a close relationship with the Hindu Dharma period instead of the pre-Hindu period. It was the king I(/ee/) Dewa Agung Made Karna, who dreamt about seeing two celestial maidens (angels) dancing. The dream so amazed the king that the next morning he gathered dancer masters to create a dance based on the dream. As the result, his vision was translated by the temple priest and village headman, then perfected with music (Dibia & Ballinger, 2004). The word *Legong* comes from the words '*ling*,' which means a dance, and '*geng*,' which means 'to have a big voice.' In other words, the *Legong*'s purpose is to make the audience amazed by the dance (Oral Statement Interview by Saba, July 8, 2015).

Based on the *Hindu Dharma*, the gods appreciate beauty. The terminology of 'beauty' in Bali is separated between beauty in the female and the attractiveness of non-human (Davies, 2012). In a dance, beauty is seen through the dancer. The way they precisely move their body through the music, how they synchronize the dance move with their partner, and how they express their emotions through their charm



〈Fig. 34〉 I Gusti Gede Oka or known as Anak Agung Raka (commons, 1954)



〈Fig. 35〉 Anak Agung Rai Saba and Daughter (Photographed by researcher, 2015)



〈Fig. 36〉 Trying the *Legong* costume (Photographed by researcher, 2015)

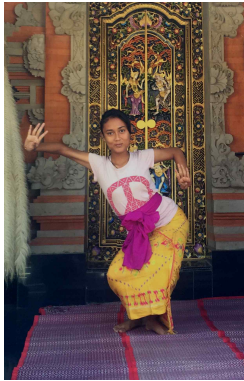
(Davies, 2012). The Balinese believed that if the *Legong* girls look alike, they would make a very fine *Legong* dancer (Covarrubias, 1937).

In Bali, the religion required Balinese people to dance. To have a skillful and famous dancer was to lead to pride and prestige in the village. Saba is one of the best known village for the *Legong* dance. The paper did a field research in Puri Saba (Saba palace) and SMKN 3 SUKAWATI (Fig. 36) and did an oral research with the *Legong* dance master, I Gusti Ngurah Serama Semadi, or known as Anak Agung Rai Saba (Fig. 35). The talent of dancing was also believed to be hereditary. This fact is proven by the bloodline of the *Legong* dance in Saba. The pioneer of *Legong* dance in Gianyar was Saba's grandfather, I Gusti Gede Oka, or known as Anak Agung Raka. Saba's father, I Gusti Ngurah Jelantik, or known as Anak Agung Raka (Fig. 34) is one of the greatest *Legong* master in the twentieth century.

Based on the oral research, it was stated that the *Legong* dance is a delicate and feminine

dance. Before, only prepubescent girls age five to twelve perform this dance to signify the elegance of the angels. After they reach the age of puberty, the young girls retire from the *Legong* dance. The Balinese believed that when a dancer glances at their opposite sex during the performance, the dance loses its meaning. However, today, due to modernization and its popularity, the *Legong* dance is danced by girls with a wide range of ages. The *Legong* dance is a *balih-balihan* dance, with the purpose to entertain the audience. Therefore, although the dancer past puberty or even married, they do not disgrace the temple.

The young girls are trained for at least six months to practice the *Legong* movements. There are 200 dance movements, the basics movements are the '*Agem Kanan*' (Fig. 37), '*Agem Kiri*' (Fig. 38), '*Ngekes*' (Fig. 39), '*Ngenjit*' (Fig. 40), '*Tanjak Nandang*' (Fig. 41), '*Tinayog*' (Fig. 42), '*Ngecak paleuh*' (Fig. 43) and '*Peralihan Gerak*' (Fig. 44). The reason this dance is performed by young prepubescent girls is the young dancer's body is



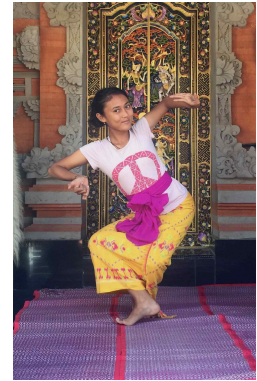
〈Fig. 37〉
Agem Kanan Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



〈Fig. 38〉
Agem Kiri Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



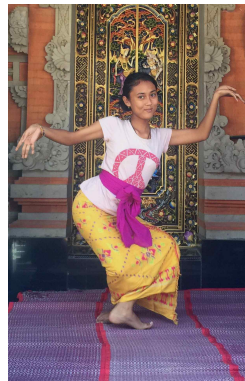
〈Fig. 39〉
Ngekes Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



〈Fig. 40〉
Ngenjit Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



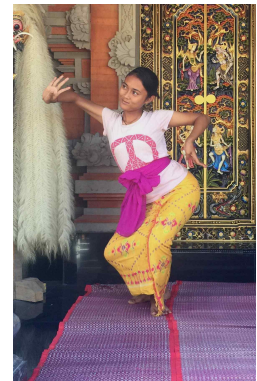
〈Fig. 41〉
Tanjak Nandang
Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



〈Fig. 42〉
Tinayog Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



〈Fig. 43〉
Ngecak Paleuh
Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)



〈Fig. 44〉
Peralihan Gerak
Movement
(Photographed by
researcher, 2015)

flexible to perform the difficult gestures as their bones are still developing (Davies, 2012). The dance is believed to be the basic dance for young girls before performing other grown up female Balinese dances.

2) The Development of the *Legong* Dance Costume

The section focuses on the developments of

the *Legong* dance costume from 1920s until after the 2000s (Fig. 45). The *Legong* dance costume in the 1920s was well documented by European anthropologists that studied the culture. The costume shows the basic *Legong* dance with a white shirt instead of *Prada* shirt. The *Gelungan* is made from organic materials, and the *Prada* cloths were made using gold flakes.

The 1930s was the peak of Balinese tourism encouraged by the Dutch, drawing foreigners to the 'ancient' island of Bali. The costume in this decade is more elaborate, with a *Prada* shirt, with *Prada* techniques only on the arms and fresh organic materials used for the *Gelungan*. During the 1940s there were political changes due to the Japanese invasion and Indonesian independence. Consequently, gold flakes were rare and expensive. Therefore, it was replaced with the cheaper option of silk screen gold paper.

The 1950s was the best decade for the *Legong* dance. The revival of Balinese tourism gave rise to the dance as one of the iconic dances of Bali. The costume was the basic *Legong* dance costume; however, alternative materials were used to increase durability. From the 1960s, the *Legong* dance had several reconstructions as the dance developed its story. Nevertheless, the iconic costume did not have significant changes other than materials.

3) Design Characteristics and Structure of the *Legong* Dance Costume

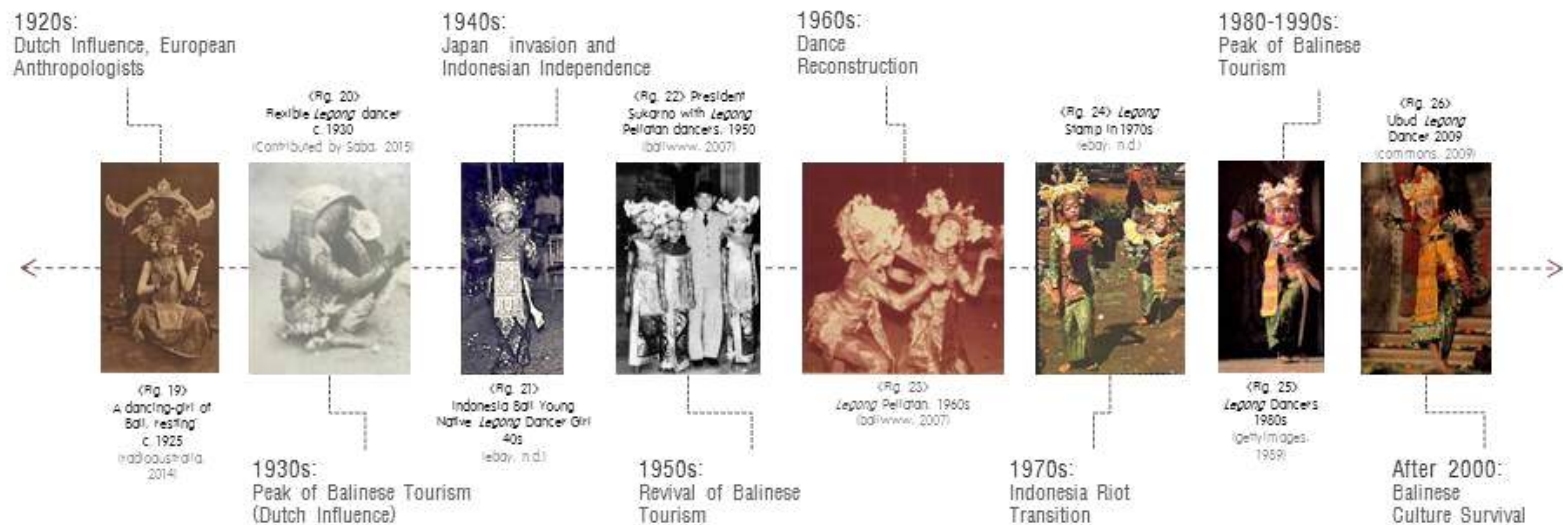
The *Legong* dance costume consists of a headdress, bracelet, necklace, breast cloth, lamak, belt, *Prada* skirt, *Prada* shirt, and a fan (Fig. 46). As with many other dance costumes in Bali, the gold headdress (*Gelungan*) is the holiest part of the costume, as the head is also considered the holiest part of the body. The concept of duality in *Rwa Bhineda* is seen from the headdress as it determines whether the character is a protagonist (*alus*) or antagonist (*keras*). In this case, the *Legong* dance is a protagonist (*alus*) character. Once made with gold, today

the headdress is made with leather, colored with gold paint, and frangipani flowers. "In some villages, this headdress is considered sacred as it is stored in a high and revered place in the shrines" (Dibia & Ballinger, 2004, p. 78). The headdress is shaped as a twin tower with two fringes hanging beside the forehead (Dibia & Ballinger, 2004). Another iconic element is the *Prada* shirt (*Baju*). The shirt, which rarely appears in other Balinese female dance costumes, is created in the name of aesthetics. A breast cover (*Tutup Dada*) wraps the upper body on top of the shirt by a narrow and long *Prada* cloth. Hanging down the chest is a piece of *Lamak*, created from leather with elaborate carvings or printed with *Prada* technique. The accessories include a bracelet (*Gelang Kana*), created from leather or *Prada* cloth, used on both the upper arm and wrist. A necklace shaped as half of a circle (*Badong*) is worn. The belt (*Ampok-ampok*) is made of carved leather with extra leather on both sides of the hip and at the back. Lastly, a fan (*Kipas*) completes the costume. The Balinese *Legong* dance costume represent the character of the 'angels,' dancing celestial maidens appeared in the king's dream.

4) Aesthetics of the *Legong* Dance Costume

The *Legong* dance costume portrays the aesthetics of 'Theatrical,' 'Angelic,' 'Charming,' and 'Decorative.' The aesthetics are inspired from the story and costume of the *Legong* dance.

The *Legong* dance is a 'Theatrical' pantomime with stylized action that acts as a story telling medium. The way the dancers display emotion through their head, eyes and hand movement express the role of angels. From the costume,



(Fig. 45) Developments of the *Legong* Dance Costume (Timeline by researchers, 2017)



〈Fig. 46〉 Structures of the *Legong* Dance Costume
(WeltMuseumWien, 2013; Chart by researchers, 2017)

the exaggerated shoulders and makeup expressed the theatrical feeling. Moreover, the luxurious gold signifies a festive visual that appears through the accessories and *Prada* pattern.

'Angelic' aesthetics shown in the *Legong* Dance costume are taken from the headpiece shaped as two towers and the belt expressing the angel's wing. The young maiden dancers performing the dance symbolize gracefulness of the dance. The *Legong* dance described pure sexless beauty (beauty with no gender) through the innocent children.

The dancer's image created by the body conscious silhouette while they moves their head, eyes, fingers, and body to display the 'Charming' side of the dancer. The aura that shines from the dancer while they enter a self-induced trance expresses their dainty side that enchanted the king through his dream.

Lastly, 'Decorative' is taken from the details on the costume. The elements are seen in the tower of flowers (*bancang*) headdress that quivers when the head moves, the strong makeup, gold patterned blouse and skirt, and the leather ornaments that accentuate the movements. These combinations in the costume highlight the dance's character.

V. Conclusion.

Costume plays a huge role in Indonesia. It is used in rituals, social status, and politics, and it symbolizes a person. This paper sought to analyze the characteristics of Balinese costume focused on the *Legong* dance costume. Field research was conducted in Puri Saba, Gianyar, and SMKN 3 SUKAWATI (Traditional Art Middle

School) from 3 to 11 July, 2015; 17 to 23 January, 2016; and 24 June to 4 July, 2016.

From the traditional costume, the clothing structure consisted of upper wear, a skirt, a one-piece, a headdress, and accessories. However, the upper wear was more influenced by the change. This paper divided Indonesia's costumes into ancient costume and national costume. Upper wear in the ancient era was influenced by the local custom and religion categorized as tube, shawl, corset, one piece, body painting and tattoo, jewelry, and cross. Modern era upper wear was influenced by foreign culture and religion, resulting in the *baju kurung* (tunic) and *kebaya* (kaftan).

Balinese costumes are the result of the Hindu teaching. The costumes were divided into participants' and performers' costume. Participants' costumes include the Great Costume (*Baju Agung*), which is based on the royal costume, and the *Kebaya* Bali, which is the type of blouse bought by the Dutch from Java.

Among the most outstanding costumes in Bali are their exquisite dance costumes. The Balinese dancing costume were grouped into the *Wali* dance (sacred), *Bebali* dance (theatrical), and *Balih-balihan* dance (entertainment). This paper focused on the *Legong* dance, which is the basic dance for young Balinese maidens. It is in the *Balih-Balihan* dance category, with the dance costume developed from 1920 until present. The *Legong* dance costume characteristics are 'Theatrical,' 'Angelic,' 'Charming,' and 'Decorative.' The *Legong* dance has a costume which had a whole package of a headdress, clothes, and makeup. A shirt is used in this costume, which is rare for Balinese traditional clothing. The costume consist

of a *gelungan*(the gold headdress), *baju*(shirt), *gelang kana*(bracelet), *badong*(a necklace whose form was shaped as half of a circle), *tutup dada*(a breast cloth), *lamak*(a cloth that vertically covers from the below the breast line), *ampok-ampok*(a type of belt), *kain Prada*(Prada cloth), and *kipas*(a fan).

In conclusion, the Balinese social system, textiles, and costumes connect and support each in an ecosystem of tradition.

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