

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

*Gambang Semarang* is traditional performing arts from Semarang which consists of music, vocal, dance, and comedy. Puguh, et al in 1998-2000 (2000) did a thorough study on *Gambang Semarang*, in their research entitled *Penataan Kesenian Gambang Semarang Sebagai Identitas Budaya Semarang (Managing Gambang Semarang Performing Arts as Semarang Cultural Identity)*. In this research, they tried to set forward *Gambang Semarang* as Semarang's identity. They studied *Gambang Semarang* performance covering the dance, the music, the comedy, the costume, the makeup, decoration, lightning and show composition.

Puguh *et al* (2000) explain that "*Gambang Semarang* is a modification of *Gambang Kromong*. The musical instruments used in *Gambang Semarang* are similar to those used in *Gambang Kromong*. The instruments are *gambang*, *bonang (kromong)*, *suling*, *kendhang*, *gong*, *kecrek*, string instruments (*tehyang*, *kongahyan*, and *sukon*) and trumpet (2000, p. 37). Thus, *Gambang Semarang* is an imported art from *Betawi* since music instruments used in *Gambang Semarang* were derived from *Betawi*'s performing arts.

With regards to *Gambang Semarang* dance, Puguh, *et al* (2000) state that *Gambang Semarang* dance can be found in *Gambang Semarang*

performance. In the past, *Gambang Semarang* dance was a small part of *Gambang Semarang* performance. Nowadays, the dance is often performed separately from *Gambang Semarang* performance. *Gambang Semarang* dance is commonly accompanied by *Gado – Gado Semarang* and *Gambang Semarang* songs. *Gado – Gado Semarang* and *Gambang Semarang* are combined as one consecutive dance.

Puguh *et al* (2000) explain that *Gambang Semarang*, as in any other dances, has a structure related to change and continuity. They act as a grammar in a dance. With change and continuity, dance can be observed in terms of its scene, sequence, and the motif. Puguh, *et al* also mention that the existing *Gambang Semarang* dance performance involves some dance performance elements which are movement, musical accompaniment, make up, costume, place, and time.

Dance movement is the main element on dance which is a changing position or body attitude while dancing (Maulana, 2015). The dance movement of *Gambang Semarang* dance performed by *Gambang Semarang* Art Company is created by Agus Supriyanto. Agus Supriyanto said that he rearranged *Gambang Semarang* dance based on the one that already existed. One of the movements that he adopted is Nyah Sam's *goyang egolan* lele (literal translation: a dance movement like the movement of a catfish). In Nyah Sam's

era, *goyang egolan lele* became a trade mark of *Gambang Semarang* arts (Judono, 2010).

Apart from the so-called modification of *Gambang Semarang* dance, the most unique character of *Gambang Semarang* Dance is that it is an acculturation of two ethnic groups which are Javanese and Chinese as the dance was created by a native Javanese and Chinese already living in Semarang for very long time. *Gambang Semarang* dance is energetic but it does not display an excessive amount of emotions. The facial expression, for example, is not as strong as Balinese dance (Sunarsih, 2013). This unique character of mixing Javanese and Chinese tradition in *Gambang Semarang* is the area which the writer thinks needs to be studied further. For the purpose of this research, the writer will focus more on the dance movement as it is the main element in a dance. In this study, the writer tries to describe *Gambang Semarang* dance movement as she may find dance movements which are typical of Chinese and the movement typical of Javanese. In the analysis, the writer considers that finding the meaning of each movement is important to understand the dance itself

Birringer (2002) states that dance is associated with visual forms and rhythms so it is fundamentally a multimedia system. Birringer (2002, p. 87) states that making dances for the camera became not only a cinematographic alternative to live dance, but motivated choreographers to bring back the

aesthetics of dance for the theatre. It means that, video helps to motivate the dancer to be better. They can review how they are doing, and by doing so they can improve their performance later on.

## **1.2 Field of study**

The field of the study is folklore. The study of the movements and their meanings of the Gambang Semarang Dance is categorized into a folkloric study because the existence of this dance complies with the orientations proposed by Elliott Oring, among others, folklore as being communal, informal, and ideological. First, *Gambang Semarang* is oriented toward the group or collective. Second, *Gambang Semarang* is not formal or institutional, and Third, it is expressing belief and systems of knowledge, Its values are implicit and it connected to notion of worldview (Oring, 1996)

## **1.3 Scope of study**

The study focuses on *Gambang Semarang* dance, especially its movements and the meanings. The writer concentrates on *Gambang Semarang* dance performed by one of local communities in Semarang called GSAC (Gambang Semarang Art Company) as the subject.

## **1.4 Problem formulation**

The writer formulates two problems related to *Gambang Semarang* dance movement:

1. What are the descriptions of *Gambang Semarang* dance movement?

2. What are the meanings of *Gambang Semarang* dance movement?

### **1.5 Objectives of study**

With regards to the problems mentioned above, this writer is trying to achieve the following objectives:

1. To describe the movement in *Gambang Semarang* dance.
2. To understand the meanings of *Gambang Semarang* movements.

### **1.6 Significant of study**

By studying *Gambang Semarang* dance movement, the writer hopes that people will be more aware of *Gambang Semarang* Dance as a Javanese – Chinese culture. It makes it easier for them to understand the dance and the meanings. There will be a better understanding of *Semarangan* culture.

### **1.7 Definition of terms**

1. Dance Movement:

Dance movement is the main element on dance. It is a changing position or body attitude while dancing (Maulana, 2015).

2. Folklore:

There are many definition of folklore. Brunvand (1987) defines Folklore as the traditional, unofficial, non-institutional part of culture. It encompasses all knowledge, understandings, values, attitudes, assumptions, feelings, and beliefs transmitted in traditional forms by word of mouth or by customary examples.

3. *Gambang Semarang*

*Gambang Semarang* is traditional performing arts from Semarang. *Gambang Semarang* consists of music, vocal, dance, and comedy. *Gambang Semarang* Dance is made of the acculturation of two ethnics which are Javanese and Chinese (Sunarsih, 2013).

