

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Dance costume is a fundamental element in a performance, especially for a dancer because costume is the first thing that is seen by the audience and also the center of interest on the stage. R.M.A Harymawan (1988) explains that dance costume as clothes and equipments needed by performer on the stage (p. 127). In particular, Harymawan (1988) says that “Costume is classified into five components; there are foundation, shoes, body, headdress and accessories.” In simple words, costume in a dance performance consists of items worn from head to toe such as crown, scarf, dress, pants or skirt, and shoes. (p. 129)

With regard to its function, Dhanang Respati Puguh (2000) defines dance costume as a set of dress that is worn by someone or a particular group which has functions to emphasize the character of performers especially in a dance performance. Puguh (2000) states that dance costume is an element to live up the characteristics, to give the role of the individual, to facilitate and to support the movement of performers. Dance costume shows a correlation among the characters and intends to assist the audience to know the characteristic of the performer (p. 27). Dance costume, as supporting elements of a dance is no less important than the movement of the dancers because costume has a role to support a performance. In short, costume is an aspect determining the success of a dance performance as the

dance element provides benefits to support the dancers to reach the goal in a performance.

Costume can be classified as material folklore that has been passed down through generations. Costume is taking an important part in *Gambang Semarang* dance as well. However, before discussing *Gambang Semarang* dance costume, the writer initially talk about *Gambang Semarang* as a performance to give a thorough understanding about *Gambang Semarang*. *Gambang Semarang* is a combined performance which consists of music, songs, dance and comedy (Puguh, 2000). *Gambang Semarang* art performance also has a combination of culture between Chinese and Javanese culture. In the past *Gambang Semarang* troupe usually were played a complete set of performances; but now people relates *Gambang Semarang* more to the dances. *Gambang Semarang* dance itself involves *Gambang Semarang* dance and *Gado-Gado Semarang* dance, a dance created by Agus Supriyanto. Since *Gambang Semarang* integrates elements which are believed to belong to *Semarang* culture, *Gambang Semarang* dance is regarded as an identity of *Semarang* culture (Puguh, 2000).

Puguh et al (2000) say that costume takes an important part in *Gambang Semarang* dance as costume is part of an aesthetic element in a dance. According to Anna Wright, aesthetics is the reaction of pleasure and satisfaction derived from human sensations through experiences of sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste (Wright, 2014). In addition, Wright also states that the aesthetics of a dress is about how people choose to appear and the way they want to look to themselves and

others within a particular context (Wright, 2014). In the case of *Gambang Semarang* dance costume, the dancers show the beauty of aesthetic in which the costume uses variation of fabric and clothes in bright colors that gives the identity of *Semarangan* (Puguh, 2000). In his study of *Managing Gambang Semarang Performing Arts as Semarang Cultural Identity*, Puguh (2000) interviewed Heny, a senior dancer of *Gambang Semarang* who informs him that costume in *Gambang Semarang* dancer was *rias busana cantik* (corrective (costume) make up or beautiful (costume) make up). On the make up, *rias busana cantik* is a technique that works to create perfection on someone's face by using light and dark shades and colors to make a better balance in the part that is considered imperfect (Kamalasanan, 2013). On the dance costume, *Gambang Semarang* costume consists of *kebaya* and *batik (jarik)*. *Batik* is drawing techniques on the fabric using wax as a mediator thus the pattern cover the fabric (Yudoseputro, 2000, p. 98). Puguh et al (2000) state *batik* used for *Gambang Semarang* dance costume is northern coastal Java *batik* known as *batik Pekalongan* or *Lasem* which is famous for its bright and colourful motifs (p. 114).

With regard to *Gambang Semarang* dance costume, Puguh (2000) particularly mentions Agus Supriyanto, a dance choreographer who modifies the traditional costumes of *Gambang Semarang* dance. Supriyanto, as stated by Puguh (p. 114), uses a variation of *batik (jarik)* and *kebaya encim*. *Kebaya encim* is a *kebaya* made of white expensive fabric imitated from *Dutch kebaya* (Lukman, Piliang, & Priyanto, 2013). Lukman, Piliang, & Priyanto (2013) states that *kebaya*

encim which was usually worn by *Tionghoa Peranakan* women has brighter colors and uses the image symbol of Chinese culture such as Phoenix. The color of *kebaya encim* is not bounded by the color rules but tends to be bright color. It is important to note that although Puguh et al mentions that Agus Supriyanto modifies *Gambang Semarang* dance costume but Puguh et al do not mention the details of the original (unmodified) *Gambang Semarang* dance costume. Instead, Puguh et al only explains that the costume consists of the *batik* and *kebaya*.

Based on the discussions above, the researcher intends to do a research on *Gambang Semarang* dance costume. Previous researches by scholars such as Puguh et al (2000) and Yuliati (2014) have already addressed *Gambang Semarang* dance costume, but since their research concentrate on historical aspects on *Gambang Semarang* as a whole performance, they have not discussed specifically on *Gambang Semarang* dance costume which is said to be a combination of Javanese and Chinese costume. In this study, the researcher describes the costume of *Gambang Semarang* dance and its accompanying aspects. Acknowledge the transformation which may happen as a result of time changes. The researcher is motivated to do this research due to the fact that many local people do not know their own culture. Belonging to Semarang community, the researcher feels responsible to maintain *Gambang Semarang* existence as it is considered as Semarang Identity. Therefore, the researcher does this research to enlighten people, especially the locals, on how meaningful and special *Gambang Semarang* is and thus, encourage them to maintain it.

1.2. FIELD OF THE STUDY

This research is related to the field of folklore.

1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research focuses on description of elements and other aspects such as material, color and patterns of *Gambang Semarang* dance costume. The researcher focuses her study on the *Gambang Semarang* dance costume only the upper and lower part costume.

1.4. PROBLEM FORMULATION

The writer, in this research, formulates two problems related to *Gambang Semarang* dance costume:

1. What are the elements of *Gambang Semarang* dance costumes?
2. What are the fabric, color and pattern of *Gambang Semarang* dance costume?

1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

With regards to the problems mentioned above, this research is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To describe the elements of the dance costume worn by *Gambang Semarang* dancers.
2. To describe what the aspects of the *Gambang Semarang* dance costume are.

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher expects that the result of this study can broaden the knowledge and the understanding on element of *Gambang Semarang* dance

costume and its aspect. Furthermore, the researcher also expects that the knowledge and understanding on *Gambang Semarang* dance costume can help preserving *Gambang Semarang* dance in particular and *Gambang Semarang* performance in general.

1.7. DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Costume

Costume is special clothes related to an art which is worn specifically in certain occasion. (Herianto, 2014)

2. Performing art

Performing art is showcasing something artistic but trying to attract when it is watched (Rahayu, 2013, p. 25)

3. Modification

The act or process of changing parts of something such as a system or style (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2017) .

4. Traditional dance

Traditional dance is all dances that have been through a very long historic journey which focus on the available tradition system in the society. (Soedarsono as cited by Widyati, 2012, p.8)