

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Warak Dugder dance is a traditional dance performed by eight people –four female dancers and four male dancers-. Usually, this dance is presented in an event called *Dugderan*. In the dance, the male dancers will carry *Warak* (*statue*) as a part of the dance. This dance is also claimed to represent Semarang and its cultures. It can be said that *Warak Dugder Dance* is a combination between traditional dance and a new creation dance. It is named *Warak* due to its inspiration from children's toys during the fasting month (Pemda Kodia Semarang - DKJT - Aktor Studio, 1995).

Warak, the toy, appears when *Ramadhan* month is coming (Pemda Kodia Semarang - DKJT - Aktor Studio, 1995). There will be an event that indicates the month of fasting will begin soon. *Warak* itself is a mythical creature that is a combination of three major cultures in Semarang –Chinese, Javanese, and Arabic-. Santoso & Winingsih (2013) describe that *warak* has the head of a dragon which is representing Chinese culture. The upper body of the *warak* is of *buraq* –an animal that becomes Prophet Muhammad's mounts when he rose to the sky and received the Grace of God-. Muhammad himself is an Islamic Prophet which is representing Arabic culture. And *warak's* lower

body is a goat which is a common animal for the Javanese people. Thus, goat is representing the Javanese culture (Santoso & Winingsih, 2013).

In short, the representation of different culture in *Warak Dance* is the reflection of Semarang's multicultural society. Semarang as the capital city of Central Java province plays an important role in preserving the cultures that exist in it. During Mataram Era, Semarang was an important harbour. The beautiful, fertile, and geographical of Semarang is strategic and attracts merchants to come to this city especially Chinese, Arabic, and Indian merchants (Tio, 2007). Those merchants came not only to sell and buy things, but also to settle down and start a new life. Therefore, there was a lot of particular kampong that has certain ethnic groups living in the cluster.

On the kampong, Jongkie Tio in his book *Semarang City, a Glance into the Past* says that "In 1747, the Dutch government enacted a racial court system. The native were subjected to Landraad while European and Far Eastern people (Chinese, Arabics, etc.) were subjected to Raad van Justitie (Tio, 2007, p. 37)." Due to this rule, the settlers have to relocate from their original place to the appointed places for example: *Kampung Arab* and *Kampung Melayu*, *Kampung Koja*, *Pecinan* (Chinatown). Those settlers affect Semarang in many ways, especially in cultures. The differences in cultures and religion do not make people in Semarang separated but united. Therefore, Semarang creates a mascot named *Warak Ngendog* that represents the blending culture in Semarang.

Like *Gambang Semarang* (Azizah, Edelweis, & Riyandari, 2017), *Warak* Dance is considered as the representation of Semarang culture. However, there are not many literatures talking about *Warak Dugder* Dance. As long as the researcher concerns, there are not many people aware of *Warak Dugder Dance* and its possible meaning. Semarang people only enjoy the dance without really caring about the meaning of the dance. As the representation of Semarang culture, this dance must embody values typical of Semarang culture. Thus, through this study, the researcher wants to expose the symbolization of *Warak Dugder* Dance.

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of the study is folklore in this case customary folklore –folklore expressed in actions like folk dances, plays, and artistic forms or rituals- especially in folk dance.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The researcher limits the research into the symbolic communications of the dance movements in a folk dance especially *Warak Dugder* Dance.

1.4 Problem Formulation

The questions to be answered in this study are:

1. What are the dance movements performed in *Warak Dugder* Dance?
2. What are the meanings symbolically communicated by dance movements in *Warak Dugder* Dance?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the researcher in studying about this particular topic are:

1. To describe the dance movements in *Warak Dugder* Dance.
2. To examine the meanings symbolically communicated by dance movements in *Warak Dugder* Dance.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Through this paper, the researcher wants to record traditional dance which is gradually forgotten by young generation. The researcher also hopes that the record can help Semarang society to preserve culture, especially folk dance like *Warak Dugder* Dance. This paper is expected to be a good material to help the readers to know more about what is folk dance, especially *Warak Dugder* Dance.

1.7 Definition of Term

1. Symbolic Communication

Symbolic communications are the things that we have given meaning to and that represent a certain idea we have in place (New World Encyclopedia, 2017).

2. Multicultural society

Multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society (Rosado, 1996).

3. Folk dance

Folk dance is a form of dance developed by a group of people that reflects the traditional life of a certain country or region. It also represents the dance forms of the common people as opposed to those from the upper classes (Bedinghaus, 2017).