

“PASANTIAN”IN BALI AND ITS RENAISSANCE IN GLOBALIZATION ERA

I KomangSudirga

Faculty of Performing Art, Institute of the Arts of Indonesia Denpasar

Jalan Nusa Indah, Denpasar

Email: sudirgakomang@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Pasantian, which means reading and reciting a literary work, is growing, developing and resurrecting resistively in the life of the Balinese community in the globalization era. This study tries to answer the following questions: (1) what was the renaissance of pasantian in the globalization era in Bali like; (2) what factors contributed to the renaissance of pasantian in the globalization era in Bali; (3) what was the meaning of the renaissance of pasantian in the globalization era in Bali?

This study in which qualitative method was used. It was intended to identify the existence of pasantian and its dynamism through its renaissance in the globalization era. The theory of deconstruction (Derrida, in Norris, 2008), the theory of practice (Bourdieu in Takwin, 2009 and Fashri, 2007), the theory of postmodern (Piliang, 2004, and Piliang, 2004a), and the theory of hegemony (Gramsci, in Barker, 2005) were eclectically used to analyze the data.

The result showed that the renaissance of pasantian took place in three periods; the initial renaissance took place from 1979 to 1990, the second from 1991 to 1998, and the third from 1999 to 2010s. Such a renaissance was supported by cultural factors. In addition, political and economic factors also contributed to the renaissance of pasantian. It had socio-cultural, and economic effects, which led to multi-meanings such as educational meaning, entertainment meaning, the meaning of politics of image, the meaning of hypermorality, and the meaning of maintenance of socio-cultural meanings.

Keywords: pasantian, reassurance, globalization.

INTRODUCTION

Reading and developing literary works resistively in Bali, which used to be referred to as mabebasan, has been better known as pasantian since 1980s. Mabebasan used to be the palace-oriented. According to Suarka (2007: 149), the tradition of mabebasan refers to a method of reading, reciting, translating, and analyzing traditional texts in the forms of kakawin, geguritan, palawakya, and seloka. Those who used to be involved in mabebasan came from royal families, especially those who belonged to triwangsa (higher castes) as well as those who came from jaba (lower caste) who were highly talented in traditional literary works. This gave impression that those who were involved in pasantian were exclusive and elites, meaning that the only particular elites who mastered traditional texts (Rubinstein, 1992).

However, in the next decades, along with the dynamism of social change and the growth of people's critical consciousness, pasantian has been developing all over Bali. Many experts have viewed such a phenomenon as an era of reassurance for the Balinese classical literary works in Bali. The renaissance of pasantian has been able to penetrate the space and time limits; it has been able to dilute the partitions of ke-wangsa-an (matters pertaining to castes) and ke-warna-an (matters pertaining to professions); in the globalization era it has acquired a space in which it can develop.

This phenomenon is marked by the fact that more and more people are getting fond of being involved in the activity of pasantian all over Bali, which used to be almost neglected. As far as the development of the arts in Bali is concerned, pasantian has never developed as it is now. Almost all the Hinduism-based religious and traditional ceremonies in Bali are completed with pasantian.

The renaissance of pasantian can be observed from the fact that more and more groups of pesantian 'sekaasanti' have been established. In Bali, almost every traditional village or even banjar (the smallest traditional neighborhood under a traditional village) has several groups of pasantian. Such groups are not only found in the rural areas but also in urban areas. Moreover, many government and private institutions have such groups.

Along with the dynamism of social change, mabebasan has been a developing cultural tradition in society since 1980s.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted using qualitative method with the approach of cultural studies. The informants were purposively determined in accordance with the objectives of the study. The techniques of observation, in-depth interview, documentation study, and library research were employed to collect the data. The data collected in the study were qualitative data as well as quantitative data. The primary data were obtained from informants whom were directly recorded, and the secondary data were obtained from documents. The data were analyzed descriptively, qualitatively, and interpretatively through data reduction, data presentation, and intact conclusion drawing. The theory of deconstruction, the theory of practice, the theory of aesthetics, the theory of post-modernism, and the theory of hegemony were used to answer the problems stated above.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Culturally, pasantian strengthens cultural endurance, resurrects the traditional Balinese literary works, and secularizes itself. Socially, it strengthens the Balinese identity, revitalizes social capital, and encourages activities. In addition, it strengthens the potential the artists have to show off themselves. Economically, it can increase the income of those whose profession is making gamelan (traditional music instruments). In addition, it is also a new source of people's income.

Pasantian in the globalization in Bali can be explained as follows. First, its renaissance can be categorized into three periods. (1) The initial renaissance which took place from 1979 to 1990 in the forms of the establishment of LembagaWidyasaba, marked by mabebasan, makuding; Bali Arts Festival 'PestaKesenian Bali' (PKB) marked by sandiyagita (gegitaan), arjanegak, and tamanpenasar; Utsawa Dharma Gita marked by competitions in nyastra; (2) the second renaissance which took place from 1991 to 1998 marked by interactive gegitaan, mageguritan referred to as DagangGantal; (3) the peak renaissance which took place from 1999 to 2010s, marked by interactive kidung, gegirang, gita shanti, tembangguntang, mageguritan.

The factors which contributed to the renaissance of pasantian in Bali in the globalization era were the tradition of nyastra, competitive culture (jengah), being motivated to be creative. Technological factors such as computer

technology and electronic media as well as economic factors including the development of tourism economy, culture-based development in Bali, and politics of identity also contributed to it.

The renaissance of pasantian in Bali in the globalization era showed multi meanings such as educational meaning, entertainment meaning, the meaning of politics of image, the meaning of hypermorality, and the meaning of endurance of socio-cultural values.

The findings of the study are as follows. (1) Pasantian has developed from recitation of passive literary works into performance of performative literary works. In other words, pasantian which used to be used to support ritual activities is currently performed as an art activity leading to an aesthetic presentation. (2) Pasantian has been one of alternative pillars to an educative system of complex life values which include education of arts, education of aesthetics, education of morality and philosophy. (3) Pasantian has shown a process of cultural cultivation done by the agent of cultural reproduction. This can be observed from its variants such as gita shanty, which then led to the creations of arjanegak and dramatarjarja (arja dance drama). (4) Although globalization has the potential of harming local cultures, the Balinese culture in general and pasantian in particular have been able to endure. Moreover, the Balinese people have been able to develop aesthetic communication through global cultural signs such as radio, television, and sophisticated communication technology, causing what is referred to as glocality to appear. In addition, such technologies have been able to encourage pasantian enthusiastically. On one hand, globalization has caused transnationalization to take place; on the other hand, localilty and ethnicity have also been developing. This condition is in line with what is stated by Robertson (in Baker, 2005: 158) that globalization at the same time also means localization.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The renaissance of pasantian in Bali in the globalization era has been a new awareness of the Balinese people of using the new cultural signs such as TV, radio, and the like to build aesthetic communication, as far as the context of traditionalization is concerned, in the era of modernism, and Balinization in the era of globalization. They have used pasantian as the root of the Balinese culture in the competition between localization and globalization to strengthen their

Balinese identity. The deconstruction related to pasantian is a critical attitude towards the existing order of pasantian to make it more dynamic, humanistic, egalitarian and multicultural by reinterpreting, reorienting, and relocating it.

From the findings and conclusions described above, it can be suggested as follows. (1) The great values of pasantian should be implanted as early as possible as an attempt to improve internal quality and the “fortification of defense” of the people’s global lives. In this case, the policy makers in the bureaucrat level and the leaders of the traditional villages should give more space and pay more attention to pasantian. (2) The government should evaluate the existence of Widyasabha Dharmaga, and establish organizations such as sanggar and pasraman which can facilitate the children and young people who are talented in pasantian so that it will become a continued activity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Through this opportunity, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. I Gde Parimartha, M.A., Prof. Dr. I Wayan Dibia, SST, M.A., and Prof. Dr. I Made Suastika, S.U.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barker, Chris. 2005. *Cultural Studies: Teori dan Praktik*. Yogyakarta: Bentang.
- Fashri, Fauzi. 2007. *Penyingkapan Kuasa Simbol*. Yogyakarta: JUXTAPOSE.
- Norris, Christopher. 2008. *Membongkar Teori Dekonstruksi Jacques Derrida*. Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media.
- Piliang, Yasraf Amir. 2004. *Postrealitas: Realitas Kebudayaan dalam Era Postmetafisika*. Yogyakarta: Jala Sutra.
- . 2004a. *Dunia yang Berlari Mencari Tuhan-tuhan Digital*. Jakarta: Gramedia Widia Sarana Indonesia.
- Rubinstein, Raechelle. 1992. “Pepaosan Callenges and Change” dalam Danker Schaareman (ed.) *Balinese Music in Context*. Frankfurt: Amadeus.
- Suarka, I Nyoman. 2007. *Kidung Tantri Pisacarana*. Denpasar: Pustaka Larasan.
- Sudirga, I Komang. 2013. “Kebangkitan ‘Pasantian’ di Era Globalisasi”, disertation, Program Doktor, Program Studi Kajian Budaya, Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Udayana, Denpasar.
- Takwin, Bagus. 2009. *Habitus x Modal + Ranah = Praktik: Pengantar Paling Komprehensif kepada Pemikiran Pierre Bourdieu*. Yogyakarta: Jala Sutra.

