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ANALYSIS OF THE FORM AND HARMONY OF WIDYA SARASWATI DANCE MOVEMENTS

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The *Widya Saraswati* dance is a mascot dance of UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar, created by I Wayan Dibia and I Gede Arya Sugiarta in 2003. This study aims to identify the structural form of the dance and analyze the harmony between its movements, music, and costumes. The analysis is based on Djelantik's theory of instrumental aesthetics and employs a qualitative research approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, literature review, and documentation. The findings reveal that the *Widya Saraswati* dance is a Balinese group dance performed by eight female dancers, representing the characters of Dewi Saraswati, swans, rays, and peacocks, and accompanied by *Gong Kebyar* music. The choreography, costumes, and makeup remain rooted in the stylistic conventions of traditional Balinese dance. Supporting properties include *tunjung* flowers, *lontar* leaves, *genitri* beads, and a *rebab* instrument. The harmony between costume and movement is evident in how the costume's form influences character portrayal and movement quality. Similarly, the synchronization between movement and music is achieved through choreography that adheres to the established musical patterns. Although the dance has undergone several structural modifications over time, these changes have often lacked consideration for artistic depth and harmony. This analysis serves as documentation and a means of preserving the dance, ensuring its continued relevance and integrity within Balinese cultural expression.

Keywords: *Widya Saraswati Dance, Mascot Dance, Harmony of Dance Movements*

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INTRODUCTION

The *Widya Saraswati* dance is the official mascot dance of the State Hindu University I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa (UHN I GBS) Denpasar. This dance, created in 2003 by I Wayan Dibia (choreographer) and I Gede Arya Sugiarta (composer), represents the university's cultural and spiritual identity. UHN I GBS is one of the state universities in the Province of Bali, operating under the auspices of the Directorate General of Hindu Community Guidance, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. Dewi Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge, is widely regarded as the divine embodiment of learning and wisdom (Masriastri, 2021, p. 112). As such, her image is frequently used as a visual symbol in educational institutions throughout Indonesia. Adopting Dewi Saraswati as the emblem of UHN I GBS is particularly appropriate, reflecting the university's mission as a Hindu scholarship and intellectual development centre.

In the context of dance—particularly mascot dances—the figure of Dewi Saraswati as a symbol of knowledge is frequently visualized and a popular source of inspiration. The visual representation of sacred statistics is often a key starting point in the creative process of dance (Suvina et al., 2020, p. 98). Numerous educational institutions in Indonesia have developed mascot dances centred around the persona of Dewi Saraswati, reflecting her significance in Hindu thought as the embodiment of knowledge and learning. Examples include: (1) *Saraswati Dance* by N.L.N. Swasthi Widjaja Bandem (1994), serving as the mascot dance of Mahasaraswati University; (2) *Dewi Saraswati Dance* by Jero Asti (2004), created as a mascot dance for Dewi Saraswati educational institutions; (3) *Saraswati Dance* by Dra. Sri Hastuti, M.Hum, and Dr. Darmawan D., M.Sn (2009), for the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta; (4) *Widya Puspa Mahottama Dance* by Dr. Ida Ayu Wimba Ruspawati, SST., M.Sn (2012), for Bali State Polytechnic; and (5) *Dewi Saraswati Dance* by Dr. I Nyoman Cerita, SST., MFA (2013), for IKIP Saraswati Tabanan. These examples illustrate the continued appeal of Dewi Saraswati as a source of artistic expression in educational settings. Her symbolic role as the goddess of knowledge makes her a compelling figure to be interpreted through dance, particularly in works that convey institutional identity and cultural values.

The visualization of Dewi Saraswati typically features a graceful female figure, either seated or standing on a lotus flower, accompanied by a swan and a peacock—symbols closely associated with her iconography. Observations of several *Dewi Saraswati* dance performances reveal that swans and peacocks are frequently incorporated into the choreography, often through supporting characters. These visual elements are expressed through the composition of dance movements, costume design, makeup, and even the vocal lyrics in the accompanying music. At a glance, the *Widya Saraswati* dance, which also features swan and peacock dancers, may appear to lack originality, potentially being perceived by the public as similar to other Saraswati-themed dances. However, despite these commonalities, the *Widya Saraswati* dance possesses a distinctive identity. Its uniqueness lies in the well-balanced integration of movement composition and costume design and the thoughtful use of symbolic dance properties. This study seeks to uncover how harmony—among movement, costume, and music—functions as a defining feature that enhances the identity of the *Widya Saraswati* dance amidst the broader landscape of *Dewi Saraswati* interpretations in Balinese dance.

Identifying the characteristics contributing to the originality of dance works with similar themes can be challenging when considered superficially. It is a distinctive feature of *Dewi Saraswati* dances, including swan and peacock dancers, though such elements are common across various Saraswati-themed performances. The perception of these characteristics, as understood by society, is a crucial part of the dance's identity. The form of the dance can be directly described by examining the visual and auditory elements that are intricately intertwined. Langer, as cited by Widaryanto (2006, p. 15), asserts that form represents the articulation of the overall unity arising from the relationship between various contributing factors. Further elaborating, Langer (in Gie, 1996) suggests that when analyzing

a form of art, one must perceive its integrity or organic wholeness. This organic roundness emerges from the diverse expressive elements embedded within a given form. A form that achieves organic unity is one in which each part or element contributes to its structure and the cohesion and interrelationship of all other components.

In analyzing the interconnectedness within a work of art, one critical consideration is the harmony among its constituent elements, which together form a unified whole (Djelantik, 1999). A comprehensive analysis requires identifying a primary component as a reference point for establishing harmony with the supporting elements, thereby contributing to the overall composition. In dance, movement is the central and most essential element (Sedyawati, 1986). The relationship between dance movements and the other artistic components—such as costumes, music, and makeup—must be harmonious. Without this balance, the dance risks being reduced to a mere display of costumes or a musical concert accompanied by incidental movement. As the fundamental component of dance, the movement must maintain its strategic presence to ensure that the audience fully experiences the artistic message intended by the choreographer, which reflects the underlying ideology of the work. Thus, the structural forms of dance works must be appropriately documented to preserve the creative expressions of choreographers in written form. This research contributes to such documentation by examining one of many Balinese dance creations that feature Dewi Saraswati as the central figure.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used to analyze the harmony between dance movements and costumes in the *Widya Saraswati* dance is a descriptive qualitative method employing a case study approach. The participants in this study were dancers from the Dance Student Activity Unit (UKM) at UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar. The analysis involved comparisons with video recordings of *Widya Saraswati* dance performances from 2007 to 2024 and observations of rehearsal processes and live performances. Dance movements were thoroughly recorded and then categorized into distinct movement phrases based on the motion domains employed in the choreography. Additionally, these movements were compared with those found in other Balinese dances exhibiting similar characteristics. A review of relevant literature and archival records on Balinese dance movements was also conducted to provide a broader contextual framework. Data were collected through direct observation of the training and performance process at the UHN Dance UKM and through in-depth interviews with choreographers, instructors, and dancers. Literature and documentation studies were carried out to enrich the data further. Data analysis followed the Instrumental Aesthetic Theory framework proposed by Djelantik (1999), which emphasizes the structural and formal aspects of the artwork, along with the harmonic relationships between dance movements and costume elements.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The theme of the *Widya Saraswati Dance* centers on the figure of Dewi Saraswati. Murgiyanto, as cited in Sedyawati (1986, p. 22), classifies dance themes into two types: literary and non-literary. According to him, a literary theme is based on plays, stories, or established legends, whereas a non-literary theme emerges from choreographic explorations of movement aesthetics without a narrative foundation. Based on this classification, the *Widya Saraswati Dance* can be categorized as having a literary theme, as it presents a symbolic figure whose meaning is closely associated with knowledge and learning. The portrayal of Dewi Saraswati serves as a representation of science and wisdom, aligning with the identity and values of educational institutions.

The *Widya Saraswati Dance* is performed by eight female dancers, with character roles divided according to movement requirements and abstract conceptual representations.

The role of Dewi Saraswati is performed by a single dancer, accompanied by one dancer portraying the swan, two dancers as peacocks, and four dancers representing *bhawa*—the radiance or emanation of Dewi Saraswati—visualized in the form of attendants or handmaidens. The total duration of the dance is approximately nine minutes. The Dewi Saraswati dancer holds the central role, consistently accompanied by the swan and peacock dancers, reflecting the familiar visual iconography associated with depictions of Dewi Saraswati. Meanwhile, the *bhawa* dancers symbolize the refracted light of knowledge surrounding the goddess, reinforcing her divine aura. In discussing the compositional integrity of the dance, it is essential to examine its structure as an arrangement of interconnected formal elements. Dibia (2013, p. 14) explains that the structure of a dance refers to the organization and sequencing of its parts or the phases that collectively shape the choreographic form.

The structure of the *Widya Saraswati Dance* is divided into four main sections: *papeson*, *pangawak*, *pangecet*, and *pakaad*. Several movement phrases are repeated within each section, with distinctions between right- and left-sided gestures. According to Dibia (interview, August 9, 2022), repetition in the structural aspect of dance is typically influenced by either the dramatic plot—if the dance is narrative-based—or the choreographer's judgment regarding the "aesthetic climax" within the composition. In the *Widya Saraswati Dance*, the structural elements are repeated: *papeson* appears once, *pangawak* twice, *pangecet* twice, and *pakaad* once. Notably, the repetitions occur in the *pangawak* and *pangecet* sections. These segments highlight the symbolic representation of Dewi Saraswati as the goddess of knowledge, with her radiance (*bhawa*) portrayed as illuminating the world's darkness.

Widya Saraswati Dance Movements

Movements are the main substance in creating dance art (Gusmail & Nugra, 2022, p. 88). In addition to shaping choreography, movement in dance functions as a medium for character exposition, atmospheric depiction, and the enhancement of visual artistic expression (Pastika & Sugita, 2021). The movements in the *Widya Saraswati Dance* are rooted in traditional Balinese dance vocabulary yet are developed further to reflect both aesthetic considerations and the narrative needs of each structural segment of the dance. The characteristics of the movements used in the new Balinese dance (creation) usually still refer to the traditional dance movements (Pastika & Sukerni, 2022, p. 132). In the *Widya Saraswati Dance*, the choreographer expands upon traditional movement vocabulary by incorporating a range of established motifs such as *agem*, *ngumbang*, and others. The movement sources are influenced by multiple factors, including the thematic content, cultural context, rhythm and musical accents, character divisions, and the design of the costumes. The following section outlines the basic postures and movement motifs used in the *Widya Saraswati Dance*:

a. Agem

Agem is the fundamental body posture in Balinese dance, emphasizing the coordinated positioning of the hands, feet, torso, and head. It also determines the distribution of body weight. When the body's weight is placed on the right foot, the position is referred to as *right agem*; conversely, weight on the left foot is termed *left agem*. In the *Widya Saraswati Dance*, the dancer portraying Dewi Saraswati uses the *agem eluh*, a posture characteristic of female Balinese dance. This same *agem* is also employed by the four dancers representing Dewi Saraswati's rays (*bhawa*), highlighting that these characters are extensions of Dewi Saraswati herself. The shared use of *agem* reinforces their unity as manifestations of the same divine source. Meanwhile, the swan and peacock dancers feature more creative adaptations. The swan dancer's hand movements mimic the flapping of bird wings. In contrast, the peacock dancers emphasize motions that resemble the distinctive fluttering of a peacock's tail—capturing each bird's symbolic identity within the choreography.

b. Nyalud

The *nyalud* movement is a composite gesture that combines coordinated hand and foot actions. The term *nyalud* is derived from the Balinese word *salud*, which refers to drawing or scooping water or the tool used to do so (*saludan*). Symbolically, this movement reflects the cultural gesture of offering or taking water. The movement begins by bringing both palms together, facing upward, positioned just in front of the abdomen. From this position, the hands are swung forward, with the elbows serving as the axis of motion. As the hands extend outward, the palms rotate to face downward, followed by an *ukel*—a wrist-twisting motion characteristic of Balinese dance.

c. Ngumbang

The *ngumbang* movement is a type of locomotor motion primarily involving shifts in the dancer's position through leg movements, such as walking. In Balinese women's dance, *ngumbang* is categorized into three trajectory patterns. The first is a stationary pattern, where the dancer remains in place while performing subtle shifts. The second pattern is known as *ngulu wangsul*, which follows a figure-eight path. This trajectory often includes variations in the dancer's level—rising and lowering the body—called *ngombak segara*. This movement mimics the ebb and flow of ocean waves, rising and falling in a repeated sequence that reflects natural rhythm and fluidity. The third trajectory pattern is a broken or fragmented path featuring abrupt directional changes. In the *Widya Saraswati Dance*, *ngumbang* is used primarily for spatial transitions, allowing dancers to change positions or enter and exit the stage as part of the choreographic structure.

d. Ngepik

The *ngepik* movement phrase involves coordinated hands, feet, and head actions. In this movement, the legs walk with a pronounced lift—raising the knees until they are parallel to the waist. Simultaneously, the arms are positioned on either side of the head, with the elbows bent at an angle and the hands executing the *ukel* (wrist-twisting) movement in a synchronized direction. The *ukel* in this phrase is performed with a sharp, firm accent, giving the impression of attempting to break or snap an object. The head's movement follows the legs' motion, creating a dynamic alignment between upper and lower body gestures. This combination produces a powerful visual expression that enhances the dramatic intensity of the dance.

e. Nyleog

is characterized by extending one arm to the side of the body, creating a lateral visual line. Simultaneously, the opposite hand performs an interwoven motion that incorporates elements of the *nyalud* gesture, in which the palms meet in a scooping or offering form. This combination of contrasting yet complementary movements creates a dynamic visual expression, adding complexity and symbolic depth to the choreography.

f. Ngelo

Ngelo is a movement involving fluid and alternating hand gestures that resemble the act of painting in the air. The motion is often described as tracing the shape of the number "8" with the hands, imitating a brush's soft, continuous strokes. Although the movement is repetitive and appears static in spatial placement, it is supported by subtle body movements that follow the rotational flow of the hands, creating a sense of controlled dynamism. This movement is commonly found in Balinese *putri* (princess) dance styles, where it serves to emphasize grace, fluidity, and refined body articulation. *Ngelo* reflects a high level of technical skill and is often used to enhance a character's feminine qualities and elegance through delicate, expressive motion.

g. Ngembat

Ngembat is a hand gesture in Balinese dance characterized by extending the arm to the side of the dancer's body. This movement can be executed unilaterally, using one arm or

bilaterally, with both arms extended horizontally. The *ngembat* gesture emphasizes spatial expansion and balance, often as a transitional or framing movement that enhances the dancer's silhouette and compositional symmetry.

h. Nyregseg

Nyregseg is a leg movement performed briskly without transitioning into a run. It is characterized by small, sharp motions that create a twitching effect in the legs, contributing to a sense of controlled energy and rhythmic precision. In the *Widya Saraswati Dance*, the *nyregseg* movement appears consistently throughout nearly every structural section and is executed by all dancers. While the leg movement remains uniform, variation is introduced through the design of the accompanying hand gestures, which are adapted to align with each dancer's *agem* (basic posture). This coordination enhances the visual cohesion and stylistic refinement of the choreography.

i. Luk Nerudut

This movement featured in the *pangecet* section of the *Widya Saraswati Dance*, performed by the Dewi Saraswati and Ray dancers. The movement begins in the *agem* position, where the dancer makes an accentuated motion toward the upper diagonal, with the hands positioned at eye level. This is followed by the dancer's gaze shifting upward to follow the raised hands. Subsequently, the dancer gradually lowers the body by bending the legs while the head follows this downward movement, turning the gaze toward the lower hand. The *ngileg* head movement, part of *Luk Nerudut*, is centered on the neck muscles, causing the head to shift from side to side at a medium tempo. When performed at a faster tempo, with the same movement pattern, it is referred to as *ngotag*, creating a more rapid and energetic head motion.

The movement motifs described above are present throughout the structure of the *Widya Saraswati Dance*. The *papeson* section is the opening segment of the dance, derived from the Balinese word *pesu*, meaning "out." This is the dance part where the dancers first enter the stage, with four dancers positioned in a row. The Dewi Saraswati dancer is at the forefront, followed by the swan dancer and two peacock dancers. As the dancers move, they transition to the right and left sides of the swan dancer using a combination of the *ngumbang*, *nyregseg*, and *agem* movement motifs. This section introduces Dewi Saraswati as the central figure in the dance. The swan and peacock dancers are integral to the visual representation of Dewi Saraswati, reflecting her symbolic connection to knowledge and beauty. The Dewi Saraswati dancer, positioned centrally in the *papeson*, still performs the *agem*, *nyleog*, and *nyalud* motifs with a soft and light quality. This contrasts with the swan and peacock dancers, who convey a sense of flight and freedom through dynamic *ngumbang* movements. The intentional contrast between the stillness of the Dewi Saraswati dancer and the dynamism of the swan and peacock dancers highlights the choreographer's aim to emphasize the subtle, ethereal presence of Dewi Saraswati and direct the audience's attention to the main character. This contrast reinforces her central role in the dance and enhances the thematic focus on knowledge and enlightenment.

As the Dewi Saraswati dancer and the swan and peacock dancers move through the choreography, they perform several intertwined movements, including the *ngumbang*, *ngelo*, and *nyregseg* motifs. These movements are executed in synchronization with the changing rhythm of the accompanying gamelan music, specifically during the *panyalit* section. The *panyalit* is a transitional segment within the gamelan composition, linking different sections while introducing a distinct rhythm that differentiates it from the preceding and subsequent parts of the music. Four ray dancers enter in the transition from the *papeson* to the segment where the swan and peacock dancers exit the stage. This transition occurs alternately with the swan and peacock dancers moving offstage. The ray dancers enter by performing a *nyregseg* movement, holding their dance props in the *agem* position. Their dance props include two lotus flower replicas, one *genitri*, and one *cakepan lontar*. The movements in this section

primarily consist of *rampak* patterns—where dancers perform the same movements in unison—focusing on the central figure of Dewi Saraswati. While Dewi Saraswati remains at the center, the four ray dancers circle her, performing identical movements. This part of the dance symbolizes Dewi Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, emitting a divine light that illuminates the world, reinforcing her role as a source of enlightenment.

The *pangecet* section of the *Widya Saraswati Dance* begins with the transition marked by the *panyalit kebyar* in the accompanying music. With their *rebab* dance props, Swan dancers enter the stage from behind, followed by two peacock dancers performing *nyregseg* movements. This section portrays Dewi Saraswati, accompanied by her swans and peacocks, actively and continuously spreading the rays of knowledge to the world. The dance movement motifs performed during the *pangecet* part include *agem*, *ngepik*, *nyleog*, *ngotag*, *luk nerudut*, and *ngumbang*. These motifs are interwoven into a series of movements repeated twice—the distinction between patterns 1 and 2 lies in the positioning of the dancers. In Pattern 1, all dancers spread out facing forward, while in Pattern 2, the position changes. In Pattern 2, the Dewi Saraswati dancer remains in the center, surrounded by a ray dancer, who faces Dewi Saraswati. The dancers transition into the final pose after two repetitions of the movement phrases. The sequence leading to the final pose consists of the motifs *ngumbang*, *ngepik*, and *nyleog*, marking the conclusion of this section.

Makeup and Dance Costumes of Widya Saraswati Dance

Dibia (2013, p. 66) states that elements such as makeup, costumes, and props hold a highly significant role in Balinese dance. Costumes, in particular, are essential in conveying character identity, enabling the audience to distinguish each role within the performance clearly. Costumes, especially in Balinese dance, are very important because the audience can distinguish each character on top of the dance performance (Bandem & deBoer, 2004, p. 39).

1). Makeup and Costumes of Dewi Saraswati Dancer

The Dewi Saraswati dancer does not wear traditional stage makeup but instead uses a mask as part of the character's embodiment. According to Kodi (2006, p. 83), there are at least three types of masks commonly used in Balinese performance: *kuwuban*, *sibakan*, and *kepehan*. The *kuwuban* mask is a full-face mask covering the dancer's face. It is typically used in performances such as the *Jauk Dance*, *Hard Mask Dance*, *Dalem Arsa Wijaya Dance*, and *Telek Dance*. The *sibakan* mask, or half-face mask, covers only part of the face—often the upper half (forehead and nose) or lower half (mouth, chin, and cheeks). This type is commonly used for characters that involve dialogue, as it allows the dancer's voice to be more clearly projected to the audience. In contrast, the *kepehan* mask covers only a specific portion of the face, such as the mouth or nose. It is typically used for portraying giant or demonic figures, often featuring exaggerated facial features like large teeth (Pastika, 2022, p. 14).



Figure 1. Telek, Dewi Sita, Dewi Saraswati Mask

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)

The mask worn by the Dewi Saraswati dancer is a *kuwuban* mask carved from *pule* wood and painted white. The facial features of the mask resemble those used in the *Telek Dance* and the portrayal of Dewi Sita in the *Wayang Wong Bali* performance, representing a beautiful and serene female figure. The costume of the Dewi Saraswati dancer can be analyzed by dividing it into three structural parts: the upper section (head), the middle section (torso), and the lower section (hips to feet). On the head, Dewi Saraswati dancer uses a *gelungan cecandian*. *Gelungan* is the head covering part of the Balinese dance, which is shaped like a crown. *The coil of the temple* is shaped like a temple made in a circle, and some are angled (Dibia, 2013, p. 90).

The body uses a costume consisting of several items: 1) Yellow short-sleeved shirt; 2) Ankin; 3) Bracelets worn on the wrist and *arm bracelets* on the arms; 4) *Simping/badong*. This part covers the upper part of the dancer's chest and shoulders. Made of cowhide carved and dyed with gold prada paint; 5) White and yellow scarves attached to the right and left shoulders.; 6) *Ampok-Ampok*. This part is used on the waist of the dancer, which is made of cowhide carved and dyed with gold prada paint Rempel fabric. This fabric is in the shape of a semicircle with a fold pattern. At the bottom, the Dewi Saraswati dancer uses a cloth / *kamen* in the shape of a *lelancingan*. *Kamen lelancingan* is a pattern of *kamen* installed vertically (observe the installation of Balinese *kamen* for women).

2). Makeup and Costumes of Swan Dancers

Swan Dancer Makeup uses Balinese dance makeup to emphasize facial lines and beautify dancers. The head of the swan dancer uses a *creative loop* with a statue of a swan head. This swan head statue is made of wood, which is then shaped and colored with a white base color. It also contains a Balinese motif of cowhide carving. In addition, the side of *the coil* is deliberately made to widen to the side to resemble the wings of a swan.

Several parts of the costume are used on the dancer's body: 1) Wing Shirt, a white shirt with long sleeves covering the



Figure 2. Dewi Saraswati Dancer Costume

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)



Figure 3. Makeup and Costumes of Swan Dancers

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)

wrists. A semicircular fabric is added at the bottom of the sleeves: 2) Ankin, 3) *Simping/badong*, 4) *Ampok-ampok*. At the bottom, the swan dancers wear white pants, a prada cloth/*kamen*, and anklets.

3). Makeup and Costumes of Ray Dancers

Ray dancers use Balinese dance makeup similar to that of swan dancers. The difference is only seen in the costume aspect, and there is a hairstyle on the ray dancers. On the head of the ray dancer, only the *patitis* part and the *Krun* part (taken from the term *crown*, but it is incomplete and shaped like a bandana decoration). *Patitis* is a part of the headdress that is attached above the forehead. *Patitis* and *krun* are carved from cowhide and given gold prada dye. At the same time, the *krun* is attached to the back of the head. The *krun* used by the ray dancers has a peculiarity with decorations resembling flower petals on the outside.

The use of headdresses that do not use *loops* on the ray dancers hints at hierarchical differences in characterization. Dewi Saraswati as the main character, is made more prominent by using magnificent costumes, while the costumes of the ray dancers are made simpler. On the top of the head, there is no decoration made of cowhide carvings, but there is a *papusungan hairstyle*. *Papusungan* hairdressing is a traditional Balinese women's hairstyle. Usually, this kind of hairstyle is used at traditional events, and traditional clothing is also used. Dibia (2013, p. 87) mentioned that four types of *papusungan* techniques are usually used in Balinese dance, namely: *pusung gonjer*, *pusung tagel*, *pusung leklek*, and *pusung lungguh (tegeh)*. Ray dancers use the *pusung lungguh/ pusung tegeh technique*. The costumes on the dancer's body consist of 1) leather *badong*, 2) ankin and chest tip, 3) belt, and 4) *Bracelets*. At the bottom, the ray dancers use *tapih* and *kamen cloth*. *Tapih* cloth is a cloth used before *kamen* was used.



Figure 4. Makeup and Costumes of Ray Dancer

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)

4). Makeup and Costumes of Peacock Dancers

The peacock dancers in the Widya Saraswati Dance also use Balinese dance makeup. The head uses a creative coil with a *patitis* part in the shape of a peacock's head, and the back part resembles the shape of a peacock's tail. The costumes used in the dancer's body are divided into several parts: 1) *Badong* leather, 2) Ankin and chest tip, 3) *Bracelets*, and 5) *Ampok-ampok*. At the bottom, the dancers used mossy green 3/4 cut pants with rubber at the bottom of the pants. The peacock dancers do not use *kamen*, but a piece resembling a pink semicircular rempel blends with the *kancut* cloth. *Kancut* is lancing in front of and between the dancer's thighs.



Figure 5. Makeup and Costumes of Peacock Dancer

Widya Saraswati Dance Properties

The dance properties in the Widya Saraswati Dance are of 4 types: rebab, a replica of *the tunjung* flower (lotus), genitri, and *cakepan lontar*. The first property is a replica of *the tunjung* flower brought by two ray dancers. This flower replica is made of a white rubber sponge with a green accent as a flower petal. The property of this replica of *the tunjung* flower is carried by the ray dancer from the beginning of the dance to the end of the pose (see Figure 8). It should be emphasized that bringing and dancing dance properties have different meanings. Dancing dance properties are performing dance movements that respond to the existence of the property. The choreographer deliberately creates dance movements that highlight the property, and the dancer's gesture design is organized to create a specific design for the property used. Meanwhile, carrying dance property only carries without any correlation between the dance movement and the property it brings.

In addition to the replica of *the tunjung* flower, two dance properties are brought by other ray dancers, namely, genitri and *cakepan lontar*. Genitri, which is used as a dance property, is a necklace of several tied genitri seeds. Meanwhile, the *lontar cakepan* combines several palm leaves that have been cut according to the size of the lontar and then made into one by tying a rope in the middle and containing a kind of bamboo cover on the outside. *The cakepan lontar* used does not have special writing like the Balinese script.

The ray dancer who carries the property of a replica of *the tunjung*, genitri, and *cakepan lontar* flowers forms a position by highlighting the property part. In the property of the replica of *the tunjung* flower, two ray dancers sit in a diagonal position in front of the Dewi Saraswati dancer, with the position of the hand holding it more elevated. The hand-designed *mapah biu* (curved like a banana tree branch) upwards by carrying the property shows the choreographer's efforts to highlight the property of the replica of *the tunjung* flower as an inseparable part of the central figure of the Dewi Saraswati dancer. Meanwhile, the genitri and *cakepan lontar* properties are brought by the other 2 Ray dancers by forming a straight line behind the Dewi Saraswati dancer. The property's prominence is done by forming a hand pose of the god. Two ray dancers spread one hand diagonally crossed, one dancer upwards, and the other dancer downwards, each hand pointing upwards carrying the property (see Figure 8).

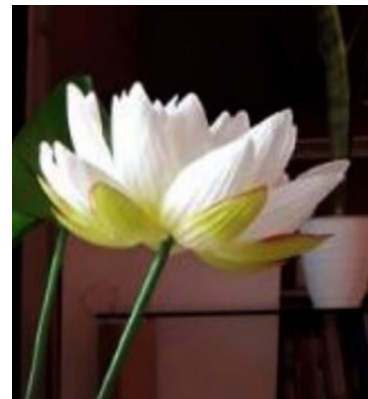


Figure 6. Dance Property *Tunjung* Flower

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)



Figure 7. *Cakepan Lontar* and Genitri

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)

The rebab is the largest dance property and the *point of interest* at the end of the Widya Saraswati Dance performance. Rebab as a string instrument can be found in several regions in Indonesia, such as Bali, Madura, West Java, and others. The rebab used as a property of the Widya Saraswati Dance is a rebab that is included in traditional Balinese musical instruments.



Figure 8. End Pose Widya Saraswati Dance

(Source: Doc. Researcher, 2022)

Widya Saraswati Dance Music

The musical composition for the *Widya Saraswati Dance* is performed using the barung Gong Kebyar ensemble. The selection of Gong Kebyar as the accompanying music was influenced by both practical and artistic considerations. First, the availability of Gong Kebyar instruments at the time of the dance's creation in 2003 made it a logical choice. Second, its dynamic and expressive musical qualities allowed for the rich construction of dramatic and rhythmic nuances suitable for dance accompaniment. Furthermore, the widespread popularity of Gong Kebyar in Balinese performing arts during that period contributed to its use. This trend is supported by academic writings from Arya Sugiarta, one of the creators of the dance, whose research on Gong Kebyar was later compiled into the 2015 book *Lekesan: The Phenomenon of Balinese Music Art*. The Balinese people's love for the existence of Gong Kebyar is evidenced by the increasingly lively activities of Gong Kebyar and the enthusiasm of the community to watch Gong Kebyar performances in recent decades (Rai S. dalam Dibia, 2008, p. 9).

Sugiarta (2015) noted that, according to his observations, many contemporary arts in Bali are increasingly borrowing or imitating the *kakebyaran* style. In light of this statement, it is unsurprising that the musical accompaniment of the *Widya Saraswati Dance* also adopts the *kakebyaran* style, particularly through the use of Gong Kebyar and the musical composition of *kebyar* in various dance sections. Furthermore, Sugiarta elaborated in his book that Gong Kebyar is a traditional Balinese music ensemble characterized by its coarse, dynamic sound (2015, p. 40). The accompanying music for the *Widya Saraswati Dance* features a complete set of instruments from the Gong Kebyar gamelan. The orchestra incorporates percussion and wind instruments when examining the performance techniques. The Gong Kebyar used consists of several gamelan stands. The ment *tungguh* represents the integrity of the form of a gamelan instrument consisting of flowers/leaves/blades and *pelawah* (a place/foundation that can also be a resonator). The Gong Kebyar gamelan used in the Widya Saraswati Dance consists of 2 large drums, which are played by editing (hit without using a *panggul*); 1 bucket of slices; 2 bronze drums; 4 bronze drums; 4 *kantilan*; 2 pedestals; 2 jublag; 2 jegogan; 2 gongs (*lanang wadon*); 1 kempur; 1 klentong; 1 *reong*; 1 *kajar*; 1 *kajar*; 1 flute set.

Harmony of Dance Movements and Costumes

The costumes used in the *Widya Saraswati Dance* vary according to the role performed by each dancer. Despite these variations, the overall structure and materials of the

costumes share similarities, primarily consisting of cloth and intricately carved cowhide. The design of these costumes plays a significant role in supporting the dancers' movements, ensuring they do not hinder the performance. Instead, the costumes enhance the overall design and complement the dancers' movements (Jazuli, 2008, p. 20). For the Dewi Saraswati dancer, the costume is designed to reflect the traditional visual representation of the goddess, adhering to established Balinese cultural symbols. The delicate and graceful character of Dewi Saraswati is conveyed through the use of the *kamen lelancingan*. This costume design requires the dancer's footwork to remain compact, avoiding overly broad stances and emphasizing small, controlled steps. The choreographer considered these costume constraints when creating the movement sequences for the Dewi Saraswati dancer. One such movement, *nampes lelancingan*, involves the waving of a cloth that protrudes between the dancer's legs. This movement contributes to the unique design of the dance, highlighting the smooth and refined quality associated with the character of the goddess.

Using a mask in the *Dewi Saraswati* dance significantly influences the movement's quality. In Balinese dance, the presence of a mask affects the volume of head movements. When wearing a mask, the dancer is instructed to slightly pull the chin inward, ensuring that the eyes of the mask are facing straight ahead. If this adjustment is not made, the eyes of the mask will appear to look upward, a condition known as *nyengenget*. The reduction in head movement volume when wearing a mask is intentional, as it creates the desired impression of *tekes* (dense movement) rather than *ngelewa* (loose or imprecise movement). Another aspect of the costume that impacts the quality and volume of movement is the *simping/badong*. This part of the costume, which passes over the dancer's shoulders, slightly restricts the movement of raising the arms. As a result, the hand movements appear slower and smoother, contributing to the overall fluidity and grace of the performance.

The dance movements of the swan character incorporate the use of winged costume elements. The hand gestures are still rooted in traditional Balinese dance movements—such as right, left, *nyalud*, and others—yet the design of the wings is emphasized as a distinctive aspect of movement identity. Another defining characteristic of the swan dancer's motif is the *ngileg* movement, which is performed by simultaneously flapping the wings and bowing the head. The harmony between the swan dance movements and the costume is also evident in the use of *badong* and *kamen prada*, which are styled in the *babuletan* form. The *kamen* is applied using the *babuletan* technique, where one end is shaped into a *kancut* at the front, and the other is drawn between the legs to the back, where a similar *kancut* is formed.

In the peacock dance, the harmony between dance movements and costume design mirrors the swan dances. This begins with winged elements and lower garments, particularly the *kamen* styled using the *babuletan* technique. The flexibility required in the dancers' movements, along with the variety of dynamic positions in both swan and peacock dances, informs the choice of *kamen* length, which is typically worn above the knee. Additionally, both peacock and swan dancers wear three-quarter-length pants to allow for greater freedom of movement. This practical choice prioritizes mobility over the visual emphasis on expansive footwork, which is less prominent in these dances due to the fact that both the peacock and swan characters are traditionally performed by female dancers.

In the *ray* dance, the choreographer does not emphasize strong individual character or identity. However, one of the defining features of the *ray* dance is the formation of floral patterns, in which Dewi Saraswati serves as the central axis surrounded by the *ray* dancers. This arrangement visually represents the essence of the choreography. The costume is a traditional princess-style outfit commonly seen in other contemporary Balinese dance creations. The lower garment consists of a *tapih* and white *kamen prada*, arranged in a semicircular shape by joining both ends of the *kamen* at the dancer's waist. The *tapih* in this dance is distinct from the conventional style. In contrast, typical *tapih* garments are flat pieces of cloth wrapped or layered with a *kamen*; in the *Widya Saraswati* dance, the *tapih* is tailored

into a skirt with an elastic waistband. This skirt design allows for greater freedom of movement, accommodating the *ray* dance's choreography, including frequent level changes and dynamic footwork.

Harmony of Dance Movements and Music

Rahayu (2019, p. 92) emphasizes that musical accompaniment in dance must form a cohesive unity with the movements. Supporting this view, Hidajat (2005, p. 53) identifies three functional aspects of music in dance: music as a movement partner, music as a means of affirming movement, and music as an illustration. As a movement partner, the accompanying music must consider all compositional elements of the dance, reflecting the choreographer's creative exploration. In the context of Balinese dance, accompaniment music serves as the foundation of the choreographic structure, shaping the identity of the dance and imbuing it with life (Dibia, 2013, p. 116). As the structural base, the music dictates the variety and quality of movements performed, guiding the overall dynamic and aesthetic of the dance.

The *Widya Saraswati* dance is characterized by choreography closely following its musical composition. However, the creation process does not rely solely on the music composer to determine the rhythm of movement. In Balinese dance creation and rehearsal, a process known as *ngadungin* is typically undertaken. The term *ngadungin* is derived from *adung*, meaning harmony, and refers to the deliberate effort to synchronize dance movements with musical accompaniment. During choreographic development or coaching, the choreographer or dance instructor carefully aligns the accentuation of the music with the movements being performed (Sugita & Pastika, 2024). Furthermore, Balinese dance music customarily begins with an introductory section known as *kawitan*. In the *Widya Saraswati* dance, the *kawitan* features the *reong* as the opening instrument, followed by the *gangsa*. According to Dibia (2013, p. 116), audiences can often identify a specific dance simply by its accompanying music. Consistent with this idea, spectators familiar with the *Widya Saraswati* dance are likely to recognise it from the opening bars of its musical accompaniment alone. In addition, the melodic structure of the accompaniment is composed as an original piece by the composer, giving the dance not only rhythm and form but also a distinctive musical identity.

CONCLUSION

The *Widya Saraswati* dance is a mascot dance of UHN I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa, performed by eight female Balinese dancers. The character division includes one Dewi Saraswati dancer, one swan dancer, four *ray* dancers, and two peacock dancers. This dance follows a traditional structure consisting of *papeson*, *pangawak*, *pangecet*, and *pakaad*. The movement motifs are derived from classical Balinese dance techniques, creatively adapted to reflect the accompanying music's thematic content, character roles, and accentuation patterns. The makeup used in this performance follows standard Balinese dance makeup conventions. Notably, the Dewi Saraswati dancer wears a white mask made of *pule* wood, emphasizing her divine persona. Costumes are tailored to suit each character while maintaining the foundational elements of traditional Balinese dance attire. The visual harmony between costume and movement highlights the distinctive traits of each role, enhancing the expressiveness and clarity of character identity. The musical accompaniment employs a complete *barungan Gong Kebyar* ensemble featuring a *kakebyaran* musical structure. The synchronization between dance and music is evident in the precise alignment of tempo, accentuation, and rhythm with the dancers' movements. This coordination arises from choreography carefully developed by the musical composition, exemplifying the deeply interdependent relationship between movement and sound in Balinese dance. The harmony among movement, music, and costume in the *Widya Saraswati* dance generates a substantial aesthetic and symbolic impact. It not only enhances visual and rhythmic beauty but also embodies the philosophical and spiritual dimensions that are integral to Balinese cultural heritage. In the context of Balinese dance education, these findings underscore the importance of understanding the interconnection among dance elements as a fundamental part of the

learning process. Strengthening this harmony fosters the development of a cultural identity deeply rooted in tradition while remaining responsive to contemporary expressions—positioning dance as a vital medium for transmitting Balinese values and identity.

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