

The Cross-Cultural Traditions of Korea and Bali: Performing Arts Tradition as a Cultural Diplomatic Representation

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Published online: 31 December 2023

Cite this article (APA): Taman Bali, D. N. M. A. P., & Wiranata Rediana, I. M. C. (2023). The cross-cultural traditions of Korea and Bali: Performing arts tradition as a cultural diplomatic representation. *Jurai Sembah*, 4(2), 24-42. <https://doi.org/10.37134/juraisembah.vol4.2.2.2023>

Abstract

This study aims to understand the significance of the cross-cultural process of traditional performance texts as a means of bilateral cultural diplomacy. 50 years of bilateral relations between Korea and Indonesia in “Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years” by KCCI (Korean Cultural Center Indonesia) became a concrete form of a cross-cultural phenomenon in the realm of traditional performing arts. The essence of cross-cultural is realized in the form of collaborative performances of Korean and Balinese traditional arts as a representation of Indonesia. A collaborative *kecak* performance intersects with the repertoire conventions of *부채춤* [*buchaechum*] & *사물놀이* [*samulnori*] with the *Sri Kamelawi & Legong* dance are the material objects in this study. Data was obtained using the qualitative multi-sited ethnography method through in-depth interviews and supported by secondary data through literature study, observation, and documentation. This research uses cultural diplomacy theory as a theoretical basis and main guidance for interpreting data. The crossover between Korean and Balinese performance texts is a process of negotiating traditional performance forms that have been established temporally and reduced in certain aspects. The process of reducing the convention is the way to create a new temporary convention, which becomes an alternative performance form for transmitting the values of 50 years of Korea-Indonesia bilateral relations. Bilateral cultural diplomacy is a concrete forum for cultural dialectics. Performing arts are an appropriate medium for the representation of cultural diplomacy.

Keywords: cross-cultural, cultural diplomacy, performing arts

Introduction

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Indonesia have recently celebrated their 50th anniversary, signifying a significant “Golden Jubilee” in the history of both nations’ international relation. This milestone,

however, is rooted in a much more extensive historical context, where Korea's positive engagement with Indonesia had been established for well over a century. Notably, the pioneering presence of Jang Yoon-won, the first Korean diaspora to set foot in Indonesia in 1920 and his generations, played a foundational role in laying the groundwork for Korea-Indonesia diplomatic relation (Susanti, 2023, p. 6). In the aftermath of this seminal event, Korea and Indonesia proactively embarked on a multifaceted diplomatic journey, engaging in various fields of cooperation and collaboration. The initiation of consulate-level relations between Korea and Indonesia in 1966 was a significant step in this direction. Ultimately, on September 17, 1973, the two nations formalized their diplomatic ties (Kedutaan Besar Republik Indonesia di Seoul, Republik Korea, [n.d.]).

Indonesia has consistently held a distinctive status as a foremost partner for South Korea and often referred to as the "First Country" in various dimensions. Notably, Indonesia is the first nation within the Southeast Asian region to have established a "Special Strategic Partnership" with South Korea since 2017 (Susanti, 2023, pp. 14 & 18). Presently, Indonesia holds a paramount position as a strategic ally for South Korea. In this context, there exists an ongoing exploration of the potential for multifaceted cooperation spanning diverse sectors. As an interactive medium for the public, the cultural sector serves as one avenue for both nations to strengthen their ties.

The year 2013 marked the inception of Indonesian society's receptive response to the "K-Wave" or *Hallyu*. This cultural phenomenon sparked an interest among Indonesians and Koreans in learning about each other's cultures and languages. In order to further promote the development of Korean and Indonesian studies, a constellation of educational institutions have been instrumental in facilitating academic endeavours. Within Indonesia, four universities have instituted Korean studies programs, while within South Korea, five universities have established Indonesian studies programs (Susanti, 2023, pp. 293-294). Within the domain of culture, it is imperative for both nations to judiciously uphold a balanced approach in their cultural interactions to foster mutual understanding and collaboration.

Over the span of five decades of bilateral diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Indonesia, these nations have navigated a complex and dynamic landscape characterized by a multitude of situational fluctuations. In observance of the illustrious Golden Jubilee marking this enduring diplomatic partnership, a comprehensive array of commemorative activities has been organized. Within this series of events, a harmonious convergence of efforts has been witnessed, where governmental and private-sector entities have synergistically combined their resources to curate commemorative agendas encompassing a wide spectrum of domains, including culture, the Korean diaspora, policy initiatives, scientific endeavours, and more. Notably, among the commemorative events that unfolded throughout the month of September 2023, the *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama, Dance & Music of a Thousand Years* has emerged as a distinctive showcase. This particular performance event distinctly highlights a collaborative portrayal of traditional cultural elements from both nations, artistically presented on a shared stage.

The Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts event, titled *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years*, was organized by the Korean Cultural Center Indonesia (KCCI) on September 5, 2023. This event was held in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea-Indonesia, and served as a vibrant addition to the ASEAN Summit 2023. This cross-cultural performance was presented by two distinguished cultural institutions. There was LKB (Lembaga Kesenian Bali) Saraswati, representing Indonesia and Namwon National Gugak Center (국립민속국악원) [*guknip minsok agweon*], representing South Korea. LKB Saraswati is an established Balinese arts institution that has been in existence since 1968 and has contributed to the training of more than 5,000 Balinese dancers. The Namwon National Gugak Center is a Korean national institution dedicated to the preservation and development of traditional Korean music and arts since its establishment in 1992. This collaborative performance showcased the rich cultural heritages of both nations through various artistic forms, including drama, dance, and music. It provided a platform for cultural exchange and celebrated the enduring diplomatic relationship between Korea and Indonesia, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of their diplomatic ties and adding vibrancy to the ASEAN Summit 2023 in Indonesia.

The Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts showcased a total of seven individual performances and two collaborative performances focusing on traditional Korean and Indonesian instruments, dance, and drama. The performance commenced with the Balinese welcoming dance called *Sri Kamelawi*. It was followed by parallel individual performances from Korea, commencing with a medley of the *Arirang* folk songs. *Arirang* is a quintessential Korean folk song embodying the dynamic spectrum of Korean emotions, encompassing both joy and sorrow. In this performance, *Arirang* was presented in the form of an instrumental medley featuring six different regional variations: *Gu-arirang*, *Gangwondo-arirang*, *Haeju-arirang*, *Miryang-arirang*, *Sangju-arirang*, and *Bon-arirang*. The third performance featured the *Taepyeongmu* dance, originally performed by kings or queens as a prayer for the prosperity of the royal family and peaceful governance. Subsequently, a musical drama performance of *Pansori* ensued. *Pansori* is a traditional Korean musical storytelling art performed by a dancer and accompanist, utilizing various aspects of human expression, including language, acting, singing, and body movements to effectively convey narratives to the audience. Following this was a presentation of the Korean fan dance, *Buchaechum*. The performance that followed *Buchaechum* was a quartet percussion art, *Samulnori Pungmulgarak*, which represents a fundamental repertoire of *Samulnori*. The *Samulnori* performance served as the concluding individual act, representing Korea.

The individual performance segment, representing Indonesia and presented by LKB Saraswati, inaugurated with an exhibition of the traditional Balinese gamelan instrument known as “*Tabuh Kebyar Jaya Semara*.” Gamelan *Tabuh Kebyar* is a renowned form of traditional Balinese music that has gained global recognition. Balinese gamelan music encompasses approximately 25 different ensemble types (Suartaya, 2019, p. 42). In the Hindu beliefs of Bali, gamelan music is also a fundamental requirement for the acceptance of ceremonial rites. The term “*Kebyar*”

in Gamelan *Tabuh Kebyar* refers to “lightning” or “thunderbolt,” signifying its rapid and dynamic tempo. *Tabuh Kebyar* has many contemporary variations, and one such production by LKB Saraswati is known as “*Tabuh Kebyar Jaya Semara*” Following the instrumental performance, LKB Saraswati continued with the *Legong* dance, a classic Balinese dance that played a pivotal role in the development of dance arts in Bali. After the *Legong* dance, LKB Saraswati continued their performance with *Kecak* dance.

The culmination of the *Kecak* dance performance signified the end of the individual performances by each nation’s representative. The apex of the Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts was the collaborative performance executed by the two representative nations. This collaborative performance, serves as the object of this study, demonstrates the existence of communication and conventions within a performance context that references the process of cultural diplomacy. Data for this research was meticulously gathered employing the multi-sited ethnography qualitative methodology. This methodological approach affords the opportunity to collect data from diverse sites and geographic locations, enhancing the richness of the study (Yulianto, 2015, p. 71). The study involved several data collection techniques, including in-depth interviews, on-site and virtual observations, literature study, and documentation. Cultural diplomacy theory is used as the foundational theoretical foundation and guiding framework to interpret the data. Cultural diplomacy theory represents the primary implementation of “soft power,” or the ability of nations to employ their culture to persuade and influence public opinion abroad (Melissen, 2005, p. 147).

Background

The presence of performing arts exhibits adaptability across a spectrum of contexts. Art transcends its conventional role as mere entertainment and evolves into an alternative mode for implicit communication of messages or intentions within a specified context. In the framework of bilateral relations between nations, art functions as a distinctive medium for fostering a connection between the two parties. This is exemplified by the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations between Korea and Indonesia through the performance of *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama, Dance, and Music of a Thousand Years*. The medium of performing arts assumes a prominent role, particularly within the realm of cultural diplomacy, with the objective of cultivating harmony and mutual comprehension between the two entities. This connection can be discerned through a comprehensive understanding of the supporting text associated with the performance, the context of cultural diplomacy, and its significance.

Inter-Tradition Art: Korea-Indonesia in The Context of Performance Texts

The focus of this study is the collaboration between traditions, which is the pinnacle of the Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts performance. The components of dance that are part of this collaborative performance include *Samulnori*, *Buchaechum*, *Kecak*, *Legong*, and *Sri Kamelawi*. Before it comes together as a cohesive performance, these

performance components have strong traditional grips and standards. In accordance with the description provided within the performance text, it becomes apparent that these components do not inherently coalesce into a unified entity.

Korean Performance Text: *Samulnori* Percussion and *Buchaechum* Dance. *Samulnori*, literally meaning “four objects performance,” is a quartet percussion show featuring four musical instruments. These instruments include *뿥과리* [*kkwaenggwari*], a small hand-held gong, *장구* [*janggu*], a double-headed hourglass-shaped drum, *북* [*buk*], a squashed barrel drum, and *징* [*jing*], a large hand-held gong (Howard, 2016, pg. 3), shown in *Figure 1*. *Samulnori* has regional variations throughout Korea, with each version adhering to its own fundamental rhythmic cycle. Notably, *Samulnori Pungmulgarak* stands as an exemplary representation of the *Samulnori* repertoire, shaped by the melodic nuances derived from the *Samdo* (three provinces), meaning *utdari* (*Gyeonggi/Chungcheon*), *Honam*, and *Yeongnam*. Performers wear traditional Korean costumes that are visually striking, often reflecting regional characteristics or specific themes, enhancing the visual appeal of the performance.



Figure 1. Samulnori music performance on *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* (screenshot). (Source: *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts_Samulnori* on hello riyani YouTube channel)

Samulnori initially was music often played by Korean farmers during ritual activities, entertainment, and agricultural work within the Korean community’s rural life. The melodies in *Samulnori* are rooted in agricultural activities, such as planting rice. *Samulnori* carries profound philosophical significance. Initially, it was utilized as part of Korean religious ceremonies, such as exorcizing evil spirits and expressing gratitude for the abundance of the harvest. These percussion instruments were also employed in rituals involving the summoning of spirits in shamanistic beliefs. However, as Korea began to undergo modernization, *Samulnori* began to be

showcased as a form of modern performing arts. The transformation of *Samulnori* into a work of art for public performance can be attributed to the efforts of Kim Duk-Soo in 1978, when he introduced these percussion instruments to the public stage. Since then, these percussion instruments have become more widely recognized and have even become a defining element that distinguishes traditional Korean music from that of other nations (Kang & Yoo, 2016, p. 5).

The term “*Buchaechum*” can be deconstructed as “fan dance” when translated literally, where “*Buchae*” signifies a fan and “*chum*” denotes dance, shown in *Figure 2*. *Buchaechum* is a folk dance that has been reinterpreted by combining elements of Gut rituals from shamanistic beliefs. The dancers in *Buchaechum* use fans adorned with peony flowers, which are typically used in shamanistic dances to express natural elements like the quivering of flower petals and the flow of water. Originally conceived as a solo performance, *Buchaechum* underwent a transformation, particularly in 1968, notably at the Mexico City Olympic Games, when it gained recognition as a group dance (Malborg, 2005, p. 139). The costumes worn by *Buchaechum* dancers consist of “*저고리*” [*jeogori*], a long jacket with a tied shirt, and traditional flower crowns. A distinctive feature of *Buchaechum* performances is when the dancers are forming circular formations to create movements resembling waves, flying butterflies, and flowers swaying in the wind, adding to the dance’s grace and beauty (Restian, 2017, p. 149).



Figure 2. Buchaechum dance performance on *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* (screenshot). (Source: *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts_Buchaechum* on hello riyani YouTube channel)

Indonesian Performance Text: *Kecak*, *Legong*, and *Sri Kamelawi* Dances.

Kecak dance, also known as the monkey dance, is a musical dance drama characterized by vocal, multi rhythmic musical accompaniment, shown in *Figure 3*. This artistic performance involves the participation of a considerable number of male performers who engage in a structured call-and-response vocal rhythm known as

“cak.” The multi rhythmic vocal music forms served as the core essence of the *Kecak* performance. *Kecak* dance is a secular and dynamic dance that has evolved from its origins as a ritualistic dance to a theatrical dance. Initially, it was an integral part of sacred performances, such as the *Sanghyang* and *Sanghyang Jaran* dances. However, since the 1970s, *Kecak* has started to incorporate elements from popular epics in Bali, most notably, the *Ramayana* and *Cupak Gerantang* epics. Distinctive features of *Kecak* dance include male performers who dance shirtless and wear a “*saput poleng*,” a black-and-white checkered cloth, fastened with a “*babuletan*” (a type of sarong). Additionally, the ritualistic element of *Kecak* dance borrowed from the *Sanghyang* tradition involves the use of fire, symbolically represented as a small tree-like structure (Raditya, 2016, p. 145).



Figure 3. Kecak dance. (Source: <https://atourin.com/destination/gianyar/kecak-batubulan>)

Legong dance, a classical Balinese dance, represents the foundational development of the art of dance in Bali. *Legong* narrates the tale of Prabu Lasem, who aspires to court Diah Rangkesari, but his love remains unrequited. *Legong*, as a form of performing arts in Bali, falls under the category of “*seni balih-balian*,” which conveys its meaning devoid of associated ritual (Matra et al., 2022, p. 298). Nonetheless, amidst its evolution, certain *Legong* performances are linked with rituals in various regions of Bali. *Legong* is typically performed by a trio of dancers, each portraying the roles of Condong, Prabu Lasem, and Diah Rangkesari, shown in Figure 4. As per the performance text, *Legong* dancers adorn costumes that are primarily green for the roles of Diah Rangkesari and Prabu Lasem, while Condong wears a shade of pink. Condong wields two *kipas* (fans) as a prop, which plays a pivotal role in the performance as it is eventually presented to Diah Rangkesari and Prabu Lasem in the course of the dance.



Figure 4. Legong Kraton Lasem dance performance (screenshot). (Source: PKB 2018, GK Anak Denpasar, Tari Legong Kraton Lasem on Made Akira YouTube channel)

Sri Kamelawi dance is a contemporary welcoming dance that originates from an original production by LKB Saraswati, shown in Figure 5. As per the text description, *Sri Kamelawi* dance expresses the joy of princesses playing in a garden and scattering flower as a welcoming gesture to honoured guests. The *Sri Kamelawi* dance troupe consists of six female dancers accompanied by Balinese gamelan music and two *gerong* vocalists. The dancers carry flower-filled containers known as “*bokor*,” and these flowers are scattered by the dancers during the performance as a sign of respect and welcome.



Figure 5. Sri Kamelawi dance performance on *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* (screenshot). (Source: *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts_Tari Sri Kamelawi* on hello riyani YouTube channel)

Cultural Diplomacy: Realm of Cultural Production

Diplomacy can be seen as a domain or scope where the production of culture takes place, one of which manifests in the form of performing arts. However, it is crucial to understand that the conduct of diplomatic activities extends beyond formal events that are participated in by specific interest groups, particularly in the realm of politics. Cultural diplomacy stands as one form of diplomacy accessible to the public, even if they are not actively participating in it. Cultural diplomacy is defined as a series of activities conducted directly by or in cooperation with a state's diplomatic authorities, aiming to promote the foreign policy interests of the state in the field of cultural policy, primarily by encouraging cultural exchanges with foreign nations or states (Patjinka, 2014, p. 100). Patjinka's definition of cultural diplomacy indicates that this domain remains laden with the function of cultural promotion through the exchange of culture between states. The process of cultural promotion within the sphere of cultural diplomacy occurs through rationalization processes utilizing various constructive components. These components comprise culture itself, the role of media, the educational domain, the realms of science and technology, with a central focus on culture as the principal point of emphasis in this research inquiry.

The dimension of culture can be examined through both narrow and broad lenses. In a narrow sense, cultural aspects emphasize pragmatic issues, while in a broader sense, cultural facets delve into matters of far greater complexity. The broader understanding of culture encompasses the entirety of a nation's identity, reflecting its civilization, history, and distinctive heritage shaped by the ingenuity of its populace (Rana, 2007, p. 98). Conversely, the narrow perspective of culture comprises performing and visual arts, involving the exchange of artist delegations, exhibitions, visits by scholars/specialists, the operation of cultural centres, and collaborations in linguistic domains (Rana, 2007, p. 98). With both these definitions in mind, it can be asserted that performing arts play a role as a representation of a nation's identity in a foreign context. In practical terms, performing arts are presented by artist delegations as part of a series of cultural diplomacy events. Cultural festivals stand as a relevant element in the focus and projection of cultural activities, benefiting a diverse range of participants (Rana, 2007, p. 99). The benefits of hosting festivals are directed towards all participants, including both the audience and the artists involved in a performance. Hosting such festivals fosters multifaceted advantages, particularly in nurturing relationships between individuals from different nations, potentially leading to intellectual dialogues. Intellectual exchanges among individuals, especially artists, can lead to a phenomenon known as cultural cross-pollination or "cultural crossover."

The phenomenon of "cultural crossover" serves as a notable indicator emerging from the diplomatic vision addressing issues related to cultural diversity. Cultural crossover, in addition to being considered a phenomenon, is also categorized as a skill. A prerequisite for diplomacy involves developing cross-cultural competence to nurture understanding of other cultures through the study of history, value systems, and specific factors that indicate and differentiate a culture (Rana, 2007, p. 202). In practical terms, the process of cultural crossover is facilitated by several crucial elements in implementing the aforementioned concept, including: (a) Each diplomat or diplomatic agent needs to cultivate an objective understanding of

their own culture, viewing it from a historical perspective and acknowledging the inherent characteristics of a culture. This encompasses grasping cultural comparisons in terms of strengths and weaknesses, forming the foundation of cross-cultural understanding; (b) Proficiency in understanding a culture does not necessitate that every diplomatic agent adopts the cultural style of another, or even abandons their own culture (Rana, 2007, p. 208). The goal is to bridge the gap between cultures to gain insights (Rana, 2007, p. 208). Both of these elements are pertinent when applied to the realm of performing arts. Cultural understanding is interconnected with other professional skills, including the ability to interpret cultural symbols, even though many of these symbols possess culture-specific attributes (Rana, 2007, p. 209).

Rationalization of Cultural Diplomacy Between Korea and Indonesia

Rationalization constitutes a further step or manifestation of the collective ideas from an ongoing event. The concept of cultural advancement and intercultural understanding becomes a prevailing idea behind cultural diplomacy. The rationalization in the context of performing arts in the text, contextualized within the realm of diplomacy, proceeds with comprehensive deliberations. The event “Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years” as an activity in cultural diplomacy is supported by diplomatic agencies, including the Korean Cultural Center Indonesia (KCCI), in synergy with the LKB (Lembaga Kesenian Bali) Saraswati in DKI Jakarta. Both of these agencies employ the diplomatic sphere as a platform for intellectual exchange in pursuit of “cross-cultural” representation through performing arts. The occurrence of “cultural crossover” is intricately linked to several considerations, both in terms of ideological or conceptual aspects and concrete artistic actions.

Traditional Performing Arts: Identity and Significance. Considerations regarding the inclusion of traditional performing arts in a presentation constitute an ideological matter that needs to be comprehensively understood. Traditional performing arts are deliberated upon in contrast to modern arts, which are more widely recognized and attract audiences from various strata of society. However, the comparison of traditional and modern arts in the realm of cultural diplomacy cannot be based solely on audience interest, considering that both forms of art fall within the purview of bilateral diplomacy. The researcher had the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the significance of traditional performing arts in this context through a discussion with Sagong Kyung, the Director of Indonesian & Korean Culture Studies, conducted via Kakao Talk. As a cultural diplomacy agent, Sagong Kyung’s arguments regarding the significance of traditional performing arts can be summarized as follows:

Researcher: 지난 9월 5일 자카르타에서 열린 *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* 공연을 생방송으로 보고 공연에 대한 연구를 해볼까 하는 생각이 들었습니다. 게다가 제 연구 초록은 국제 과학 저작 컨퍼런스에서 발표할 기회를 받았습니다. 네, 그 공연은 한-인도네시아 수교 50주년을 기념하기 위해 마련됐습니다.

그런데 왜 공연예술을 외교수단으로 선택했을까요? 다른 예술 형태도 있지 않습니까?

[Translation] After watching the *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* performance live in Jakarta on September 5th, I considered to conduct a research on the show. Additionally, the abstract of my research has been given the opportunity for presentation at an International Scientific Writing Conference. The performance commemorated the 50 years of diplomatic relations between Korea and Indonesia, right? However, why did they choose performing arts as a means of diplomacy? Aren't there other forms of art as well?

Informant: 공연예술 뿐만 아니라 여러방면에서도 수교50주년 기념행사를 하고 있습니다. 아마도~~~ 공연예술은 소프트 콘텐츠 중에서도 인간의 감성에 호소하고 상상력을 자극하는데 원동력이 될 것이기 때문일겁니다. 다른 예술보다도 더 호소력이 강해서이지 않을까요. 4차산업시대에도 인공지능이 할 수 없는 공연예술은 더욱 꽃피게 되지 않을까요. 다른 예술보다도 호소력이 강하고 직관으로 느낌이 오고. 특히 공연예술은 종합예술이기 때문에 국가의 정체성이며 국가의 격을 보여주기도 한다.

[Translation] Actually, that was not only performing arts. We celebrated our 50th diplomatic anniversary in many ways. Performing arts includes soft content. This is because it will serve as a driving force in appealing to human emotions and stimulating their imagination. Isn't it because its appeal is more substantial than other art forms? Even in the Fourth Industrial Revolution era, isn't performing arts something that can't be done by increasingly developed artificial intelligence? It has a stronger appeal than other art forms, and we can feel it intuitively. Moreover, performing arts are composite arts, and performing arts can also show national identity and status.

Researcher: 아, 네. 저도 8월에 인도네시아 국립 박물관에 도자예술을 봤습니다. 네 저도 같은 생각입니다. 그런데 왜 그 공연에서 판소리, 태평무, 부채춤, 민요, 사물놀이, 등 같은 한국 전통 공연이 등장할까요? 최근에 더 큰 반향을 불러일으키는 것은 바로 K-Pop 문화가 아닐까요?

[Translation] Ah yes. I also saw a ceramic art exhibition at the National Museum of Indonesia in August. That's right, I also thought the same thing. But why do the performing arts that appeared in the show were traditional Korean arts, such as *Pansori*, *Taepyeongmu*, *Buchaechum*, *Minyo*, *Samulnori*, etc.? Isn't it K-pop culture that has a more extensive resonance?

Informant: 저도 봤어요. 도자기도 있었고~~~ 전통문화에는 오리지널의 힘이 있습니다. - 그리고 케이 팝은 바탕이 서양이라서 저는 개인적으로 케이 팝의 큰 반향에 대해 회의적입니다. 저는

한국과 인도네시아의 전통 예술이 융합해서 새로운 예술세계를 창조하는 것을 꿈꾸는 사람입니다. 전통문화에는 국가의 정체성이 있습니다. 한국의 전통예술과 한국의 전통예술이 융합해서 만드는 새로운 예술세계는 큰 힘이 있을것입니다. 그래서 시도도 많이 해 봤습니다.

[Translation] I saw it, too. There was also a ceramic art exhibition~~~Traditional culture has the power of originality - And since K-pop is based in Western cultures, I am personally sceptical of K-pop's big impact. I am a person who dreams of creating a new art world by combining Korean and Indonesian art. Traditional culture has a national identity. The new world of art built from the fusion of traditional Korean art and traditional Indonesian art will have great power. So, I put a lot of effort into it.

In this interview, Sagong Kyung argues that performing arts tend to convey their messages with a sense of subtlety. The refinement of art is reflected in its approach to conveying ideas, in other words, through implicit and symbolic means. Because art is closely linked to aesthetics and psychology, its presence, or the power it carries, can penetrate the mind and emotions, playing a role in delivering simultaneous impacts. Kyung further explains that performing arts serve as a means of artistic expression that can be composed in various ways. The compositional process is related to cultural processes such as assimilation, adaptation, and even reduction, while adjusting the urgency of the art's presence. The refinement of art has the potential to convey the strength of the respective cultural identities. This cultural strength becomes a means of fortifying identity in the face of disruptive influences that may tend to weaken its potential. As an analogy, the significance of culture is like roots in this context.

Informant: 인도네시아를 생각해 보세요. 전통은 모든 예술의 뿌리입니다. 근본입니다. 가믈란, 와양, 바틱, 전통춤. 너무도 많지요. 오리지널의 힘은 그 나라 문화예술을 튼튼하게 한답니다. [...] 전통문화는 창조적으로 계승되어야 합니다. 우리(인도네시아 혹은 한국)의 뿌리는 전통예술입니다. 그 전통예술을 잘 살려야 합니다.

[Translation] Let's think about Indonesian culture. Tradition is the root of all art. This is very fundamental. Gamelan, wayang, batik, traditional dance. There are lots of them. The power of originality strengthens the culture and art of a nation. [...] Traditional culture must be inherited creatively. Our roots (Indonesia and Korea) are traditional arts. We must keep traditional arts alive.

A culture, including traditional performing arts within it, needs to be creatively transmitted to ensure its development and continuity. Regardless of the essence of its performing arts, the transmission process is said to have a greater impact when it involves practical creative embodiment.

The Meeting of Korea and Indonesia in the Creative Space of Performing Arts. The event “Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years” is part of a tangible projection of bilateral relations delicately packaged through performing arts. This event serves as a meeting point for two traditions - Korea and Indonesia - to get to know and appreciate each other. The appreciation is not limited to merely recognizing forms and being unilaterally observed between the two traditions. Both aims to create a new form of performance and establish a new world in the realm of performing arts.

저는 시도해 보았습니다. 인도네시아의 힘은 다양성입니다. 문화예술도 다양할 수록 세계가 발전합니다. 두 오리지널 문화의 융합, 콜라보는 새로운 예술세계를 만들 수 있습니다. 가믈란(발리)과 사물놀이의 콜라보 가믈란과 펑키음악, 바틱으로 만드는 한복, 앙끌롱과 한국스트링의 콜라보, 한국전통 스트링과 인도네시아 스트링의 콜라보, 전통예술간의 소통과 교류.

[Translation] I’ve tried to put a lot of effort into it. Indonesia’s strength lies in its diversity. The more diverse cultures and arts become, the more the world develops. The fusion and collaboration of two native cultures can create a new world of art. Collaboration between gamelan (Bali) and *Samulnori*. A combination of funky and gamelan music, hanbok made with batik, collaboration of angklung and Korean strings, collaboration of traditional Korean and Indonesian strings, communication, and exchange between traditional arts. (Quoting Sagong Kyung’s interview, translated by the researcher)

Kyung’s statement regarding the utilization of the diversity of traditional arts for the well-being and creation of a new world in the realm of arts aligns with the principles outlined in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity under the theme of identity, diversity, and pluralism. As stated in “Article 3 - Cultural Diversity as a factor in Development” of the declaration,

Cultural diversity widens the range of options open to everyone; it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence. (UNESCO, [n.d.])

The new world of art goes beyond presenting different forms or performances compared to the past; it can be viewed as an achievement in the context of intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual development or rejuvenation. This new world of traditional art in the cultural production process is one of the steps to avoid the audience’s stigma that traditional art tends to be monotonous, unprogressively, or even boring. The concept and realization of this new world are carried out by the Korean Culture Center Indonesia (KCCI) in collaboration with the LKB (Lembaga Kesenian Bali) Saraswati through a process of “cultural exchange.”

As written in the subsection “Inter-Tradition Art: Korea-Indonesia in the Context of Performance Texts,” the collaborative performance of Korean traditions (*Buchaechum*, *Samulnori*) and Indonesian traditions (*Kecak*, *Baleganjur*, *Sri Kamelawi*, *Legong*) becomes a repertory presented collaboratively in this event.

Indonesia is represented in this opportunity by the traditional arts of Bali, as argued:

그러나 발리를 대표문화라고 하는 것은 발리 문화는 그만큼 세계화가 잘되어 있기 때문입니다. [...] 한국인들에게 발리의 빠른 템포가 더 흥미롭게 느껴진답니다.

[Translation] However, Bali is considered a representative culture because Balinese culture has been well-globalized. [...]. The fast tempo of Balinese performances attracts more attention from Koreans. It feels closer. (Quoting Sagong Kyung's interview, translated by the researcher)

The choice of Balinese traditional art alongside Korean traditions, despite the worldwide recognition of both, is based on the similarity in the rhythm of the performances and the potential for attraction in both traditions. The process of "cultural exchange" was then carried out after considering the similarities between these two traditions. To gain insights into the process of "cultural exchange" in the realm of performing arts, the researcher had the opportunity to explore information from Ayu Sri, who serves as the coordinator of the LKB (Lembaga Kesenian Bali) Saraswati in DKI Jakarta.

- Researcher: Do you agree that the recent collaboration's goal was cultural diplomacy?
- Informant: Yes.
- Researcher: Then, in the collaborative performance, who decided (thinking) on the Korean side to include *Samulnori* and *Buchaechum* dancers, while on your side, you had *Baleganjur*, *Kecak*, *Sri Kamelawi*, and *Legong* dancers? Was there someone who made these decisions, or how did it happen?
- Informant: On their part, the initial idea was only for *Kecak*. As for *Legong*, that idea came from us. We initially thought that *Kecak* originated from *Legong*, which is the *Sanghyang* dance. That was the direction we were thinking. Because they provided us with materials, and it turned out that they were only showing separate dances. And at first, we thought it was all part of one unit. However, they were separate dances. So, we thought, "Oh, besides *Kecak*, we need another separate dance that doesn't fit into the story." I mean, with *Kecak*, it's usually a complete set, but for them, there were several individual items, each lasting a few minutes. So, we needed to include another separate dance so the transition wouldn't be too abrupt. It was more about accommodating those things. Because their materials were like that, we thought, "Okay, let's add another one, just instrumental." At first, the idea was that we play the instrument, and then they play their instrument, too, so it would be alternating performance. But the issue was with the sound system because it would be troublesome to switch back and forth. There would be many gaps. So, we decided to package it as one from Korea and one from Indonesia. That was mainly due to time constraints as well. It was challenging. (Laughs)
- Researcher: Okay, (thinking) there was a lot of improvisation in the

performance yesterday, right? For example, *Legong* has its own traditional grips and standards, but in this collaborative dance, the movements were quite different from those traditional patterns. Like this and this (demonstrates moves). How was the communication process for that? Did you adapt to the rhythm of *Samulnori*, or how did it work?

Informant: We did adapt to the rhythm of the music at that time. We didn't stick too strictly to the traditional *Legong* patterns because forcing it that way would have seemed unnatural. We adapted based on the music's rhythm. Perhaps because we are used to living and performing in Jakarta, the style naturally adjusted. The collaborative dance performed yesterday was more of a representation of Indonesian dance rather than strictly Balinese. Some parts of the music wouldn't fit well with traditional Balinese movements during the collaboration. We did include some specific Balinese elements, but overall, we adapted to the collaborative context.

[PRE-MEMORY]

Researcher: And in the process that we discussed earlier, in every collaboration, there's usually a fusion, a reduction of traditional grips or standards, right? (Thinking) How do you process that? How do you start with something firm in its original form and then present it that way?

Informant: Because we've collaborated several times and live in a diverse environment in Jakarta, we've had to get used to being open to different things. We can't be too rigid. However, we still clarify that certain aspects cannot be compromised. For example, with *Legong*, they wanted us to perform *Legong* with a larger group of dancers. *Legong*, in Balinese traditional standard, can be performed by only two dancers or three dancers with *Condong* dancer. It cannot be adapted to six or eight dancers, turning it into a mass dance. We cannot make that request because there are rules that must be followed. In a way, what's traditional should be maintained. Actually, on a large stage, performing *Legong* with only two dancers might look too sparse. But we followed that Balinese traditional standard because it was created that way. At most, we added a third dancer and, if necessary. However, we only showed two dancers accordingly because the duration was short. So, there are elements that can be adjusted, and there are elements that must strictly adhere to tradition. But when it comes to collaborations, since the early days when my father first began collaborating with Western music, some people in Bali initially disagreed with the changes. They wondered why it was being done that way. But eventually, they accepted it. As for my father, in his gamelan collaborations, he maintained the gamelan tuning with the notes *nong*, *neng*, *nung*, *nang*, and *ning*. But now, in contemporary collaborations, the tuning has changed to do, re, mi, fa, so. Have you noticed that? It has evolved.

Ayu Sri explained in her interview that the process of “cultural exchange” begins with a direct cultural study as part of the collaboration. This cultural exchange can be considered successful because it involves an effort to implement a rapid cultural adaptation process. The speed of this process is influenced by the diverse and multicultural environment of DKI Jakarta. Rigidity is not an option, although there is an understanding of conventions and consensus that cannot be intervened. Considering the intersection of conventions (*pakem*) and the realm of cultural diplomacy production, the creators then engage in a dialogue that results in alternative performances to achieve the goals of cultural diplomacy.

The presentation of alternative performances goes through a process referred to as anti-structure, as described by Brian Sutton-Smith in Marvin Carlson’s work:

The normative structure represents the working equilibrium, the “anti-structure” represents the latent system of potential alternatives from which novelty will arise contingencies in the normative system require it. We might more correctly call this second system the *pro cultural* system because it is the precursor of innovative forms. Is the source of new culture. (1996, p. 19)

The anti-structure implemented within the traditional conventions does not entirely eliminate the existing order but rather temporarily reduces or refrains from presenting rigidity during specific times. This is evident in the collaborative performance *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* in the following descriptive scenarios for each repertoire: (a) The *Buchaechum* dancers leave behind the *Buchae* “fans” props in the collaborative performance with *Baleganjur* and the accompanying chorus. The *Buchaechum* dancers adapt to the *Kecak* circle with movements adjusted to the rhythm of “cak” and the sounds of *Baleganjur*; (b) The *Legong* and *Sri Kamelawi* dancers momentarily abandon the fixed traditional dance forms and employ movements that do not characterize the Bali tradition. These movements adapt to the accompaniment of *Samulnori*; (c) The *Kecak* performance undergoes a reduction, meaning the elimination of the use of fire in the middle of the circle. Additionally, the circular sitting pattern transforms into a half-circle and elongated row, and the traditional costumes (*babuletan*) are worn unusually with black *kamen*, *saput poleng*, black t-shirts, and *badong* for aesthetic purposes; (d) The *Legong* dancers, who should normally total three, are reduced to two without the *kipas* (fans) prop. Their movements follow the rhythm of *Samulnori* without adhering to traditional dance forms; (e) The *Sri Kamelawi* dancer does not carry a *bokor bunga* (flower container) prop during the collaborative performance. The dance movements are synchronized with the rhythm of *Samulnori*, shown in *Figure 6 & 7*.



Figure 6. Kecak and Buchaechum collaboration dance performance on *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* (screenshot). (Source: 230905_Korea Indonesia Performing Arts Closing Encore on hello riyani YouTube channel)

The alternative performances are physically projected to convey the projection of cultural diplomacy. From a deeper perspective, the anti-structure process and the new performance have a fundamental and visionary aspect, as follows:

양보하는 경우도 있지만 보완하는 경우도 왔지요. [...] 발리의 가믈란과 사물놀이는 두 나라의 전통의 개성을 살리면서도 멋진 호흡을 이루었습니다. 한국의 난타는 사물놀이의 리듬에 서양의 뮤지컬이라는 형식에 접목한 퓨전 공연입니다. 약 30년째?? 인기리에 공연됩니다 & 예, 특히 오리지널 문화의 융합은 문화생태계의 인프라를 키우는 중요한 포인트입니다. [...]

[Translation] Sometimes we give concessions, but there are also times when we complement each other. [...] Balinese gamelan and *Samulnori* create beautiful harmony while preserving the unique traditions of both countries. “Nanta Korea” is a fusion performance that combines *Samulnori* rhythms with a Western musical format. About 30 years?? This show is very popular.” & “Yes, moreover, the combination of native cultures is a crucial point in growing the infrastructure of the cultural ecosystem. [...]. (Quoting Sagong Kyung’s interview, translated by the researcher)



Figure 7. Sri Kamelawi & Legong dancers collaboration with Samulnori music on *Korea-Indonesia Performing Arts of Drama Dance & Music of Thousand Years* (screenshot). (Source: 230905_Korea Indonesia Performing Arts_Closing Encore on hello riyani YouTube channel)

Conclusion

The commemoration of the 50-year bilateral relationship between the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Indonesia transcends its geopolitical significance, embodying a multifaceted cultural dimension. This multifaceted nature is underpinned by several key elements that together contribute to the realization of diplomatic goals. Notably, one pivotal facet is the deployment of performing arts as a vehicle for cultural diplomacy. This form of diplomacy operates with a nuanced approach, focusing on the content that assures its accessibility to diverse segments of society. By adopting this approach, the objective is to facilitate a deeper understanding of the bilateral relationship, making it a meaningful and resonant force even for those individuals who might have only recently become cognizant of the interconnections between these two nations.

Traditional performing arts stand as a flagship medium in diplomatic efforts due to their authentic nature in projecting a nation's and a country's identity. Both Korean and Indonesian traditional arts come together not to compete but to contest. This contestation is undertaken through the process of cultural development and the creation of new cultures within the realm of traditional performing arts. Traditional performing arts are laden with conventions and consensuses that govern them (*pakem*). However, essentially, these conventions serve as guidelines to ensure that the cultural roots remain preserved in their implementation. The field of cultural diplomacy invites each tradition to melt and engage in dialogue for the sake of harmony and understanding.

Anti-structure represents an attempt, albeit temporary, to momentarily depart

from behaviours and attributes that may be appropriate when acting independently but are not relevant when forced to remain present. This dynamic has the potential to create a new culture that underscores the importance of creativity in the diversity of traditions.

Acknowledgment

We would like to express our gratitude to the lecturers of the Korean Language and Culture Program at the University of Indonesia specifically Eva Latifah, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D., Dr. Rostineu, M.A., and Afriadi, M.Hum., for their invaluable support, scholarly guidance, and profound insights in mapping the conceptual and theoretical foundation of our study on 'The Cross-Cultural Traditions of Korea and Bali: Performing Arts Tradition as a Cultural Diplomatic Representation.' Their contributions have provided a solid foundation for our research, and we consider ourselves fortunate to have learned from their wisdom and knowledge. Thank you for the invaluable guidance in the development of this research.

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