THE RECONSTRUCTION OF “JEPIN TALI” SINTANG DANCE

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ABSTRACT

Jepin Tali dance is one of the traditional Malay dances from Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province. This Jepin Tali dance was very popular then, especially among the Malay tribe community, because the community participated in dancing or bejepen at every performance. This is a group dance performed by both male and female dancers. However, this dance has been hibernating. Accordingly, this research aims to reconstruct the Jepin Tali dance so it can be revived in the community. This study is a practice-led research. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and literature study. Burra Charter's theory was used in the dance reconstruction. The results of this study indicate that the reconstruction increased the range of motion from 3 to 16 varieties, musical instruments, make-up and clothing, and floor patterns. The dance structure was developed into three parts: the beginning, the core, and the closing, by using the property of eight ropes braided in red, green, blue, and yellow colors and accompanied by music featuring Siti Zubaidah's poetry.

Keywords: Reconstruction, dance, and Jepin Tali.

ABSTRAK


Kata kunci: Rekonstruksi, tari, dan Jepin Tali.
1. Introduction

Jepin Tali dance is one of the tradition(al) Malay dances originating from Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province. Traditional dance is a form of traditional cultural heritage that lives and develops in the archipelago, both in the palace, rural, and far flung area that have transcended space and time (Widyastutiningrum & Wahyudiarto, 2014). This Jepin Tali dance has existed since the Malays were in Sintang Regency. The Malays entered the Sintang area along with the entry of Islam religion into Sintang Regency. The process of the entry of Islam into Sintang Regency is still not clearly known unless seen from historical records originating from the Wazir (Mangkubumi, Prime Minister) Prince Ratu Idris Kesuma Negara, a popular person ranging from 1822 to 1857 (Sjamsuddin, 2008).

The word 'Jepin' or 'Zapin' comes from the Arabic word "Al-zafn" which means footmotion. The mention of the word 'Jepin' which comes from the word 'Zapin' is influenced by differences in the use of vocabulary in each region. According to Husein, the Jepin dance is also called by various names, such as Zapin, Jipin, Jippeng, Jepen\(^1\), Bendana, Dana, and Dana-Dani (Basyar, 1996) (Astuti, 2016). Jepin dance entered the territory of Indonesia brought by Arab traders, then this Jepin dance developed in the coastal areas of West Kalimantan Province. Jepin Tali dance developed together with other Jepin dances, namely in the 18\(^{th}\) century which ranged from the 1980s to the 1990s (Pratiwi, Ismunandar, & Muniir, 2017) (Ulan, Ismunandar, & Fretisari, 2019). Over time, the Jepin Tali dance in Sintang Regency disappeared, due to a lack of public care to preserve an existing traditional dance and be more interested in new dance creations. The Jepin Tali dance has the theme of *gotong royong* or togetherness which illustrates the importance of communication, working together and helping each other in everyday life (Samsudin, 2021).

According to one of the managers of the Keraton Malay studio in Sintang Regency, Gusti Muhammad Fadli, this Jepin Tali dance never appears again, because

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1 Step or footwork (foot movement)
the duration of time is quite long with a minimum duration of 20 minutes which makes this dance rarely appear in a large event, the duration depends on woven rope to be made. The interesting thing about the Jepin Tali dance is how the dancers try to produce beautiful weaving by using a slightly complicated dance technique with repetitive movement patterns and the dancers are obliged to remember the binding patterns so that the woven rope can be opened again. This illustrates the meaning of this dance, which is about social life. In essence, every problem must have a solution and if a job or problem is solved together, then all of it will feel lighter. In addition to the theme of togetherness (gotong royong) in the Jepin Tali dance, this dance also describes the human nature and behavior that must be possessed, namely tolerance and respect for one another (Fadli, 2021).

The Jepin Tali dance is lost due to the lack of public interest in preserving the existing traditional dance and lot of people do not know about the existence of the Jepin Tali dance. According to previous people, this dance is considered monotonous with a long duration of performance. For the above phenomenon, the author captures a crisis situation in terms of preserving traditional dances in Sintang Regency. For this reason, the author aims to reconstruct the Jepin Tali dance so that the cultural heritage in Sintang Regency can be maintained and sustainable.

2. Literature Review

In carrying out this artistic research, the author uses several theoretical foundations based on the opinion of experts to This study uses the theory of reconstruction and form. “Rekonstruksi” according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary which means rearranging and returning to its original state (KBBI, n.d.). The theory of reconstruction put forward by Burra Charter is:

Reconstruction is a term to restore something damaged/lost, to build something that already existed with new materials, the most extreme form of reconstruction is to create an imitation of something by dismantling it entirely.

This theory is used to underlie the reconstruction efforts carried out by the author on
the Jepin Tali dance in Sintang Regency.

According to Sri Rochana Widyastutiningrum that revitalization has several stages, namely 1) digging, 2) reconstruction, 3) reinterpretation, and 4) dance re-actualization, which basically aims to live it again, preserve, actualize and make a dance more valuable (Widyastutiningrum, 2007). Reconstruction is one of the revitalization processes.

Form is a combination of several elements or components that are physical, interrelated and integrated in a single unit (Maryono, 2015). The book entitled “Melihat Tari” (Seeing Dance) reveals in a micro way that the performance can be seen in text about the scope of dance formation, starting from movement, dancers, fashion make-up, floor patterns, dance music and staging places (Slamet, 2016). The authors add property and theme components, to explore the properties and themes used in this research object, where the rope property is the core of the Jepin Tali dance performance.

3. Creation Methodology

This study uses a type of artistic research, which is carried out by reconstructing the Jepin Tali dance into a work of art that comes to life and produces knowledge about the reconstruction method of traditional dance. Preliminary research using data collection methods conducted by interview, observation, and literature review.

Interviews with informants consisted of: Hery Samsudin (64 years old), Gusti Muhammad Fadli (52 years old), Widianti (37 years old), Siti Musrikah (52 years old) and Andreas Andi Pranata (27 years old). Observations were made by visiting several studios and community activities in Sintang Regency to find out about the existence of the Jepin Tali dance. While the literature study was carried out with a focus on the results of previous research on the Jepin Tali dance and related references. The results of the preliminary research are used as a foothold in reconstructing the Jepin Tali dance. Reconstruction is carried out in stages, namely determining the theme, arranging the movement, determining the floor pattern,
determining the make-up and clothing, and evaluating.

4. Discussion
4.1. Preliminary Research

The reconstruction of the Jepin Tali dance begins with preliminary research, namely extracting data and information regarding the existence of the Jepin Tali dance in the past. The choreographer's first step is to conduct an interview. The authors and Widianti conducted interviews with several experts and artists in Sintang Regency. In this activity there is interaction and absorption as well as transformation of knowledge, science, and technique known by several art experts.

Interviews were conducted directly with Malay dance experts in Sintang Regency, namely Hery Samsudin and Gusti Muhammad Fadli. Previously, Hery, who was one of the sources of this research, had previously conducted research on the Jepin Tali dance in Sintang Regency, but had not yet had time to write about it. From the results of these activities, information was obtained about several elements of the Jepin Tali dance, including the variety of movements, floor patterns, musical instruments/poems, and fashion makeup. The elements of traditional dance include the dance title, dance theme, dance type, number of dancers and gender, dance hall, and mode of presentation (Trisnawan & Rokhim, 2021).

As for the description of the results of the interview, namely the variety of movements used were _bejepen_\(^2\), double step, and lifting/hanging Jepin. The poems used are Siti Zubaidah's poetry and Selendang Delima's poetry, while the musical instruments used are only _Gambus_ and _Meruas_. The floor pattern used is circular. The make-up uses is beautiful make-up, while the clothes used are _teluk belanga_\(^3\) and _baju kurung_\(^4\).

The second step taken by the choreographer was direct field observations to

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\(^2\) Movement of the foot with the right foot stepping forward with the heel as a support, then tread and then the right foot back together with the left foot stepping forward and resting on the heel.

\(^3\) Malay traditional clothes for men.

\(^4\) The clothes that are usually worn for Malay tribal ceremonies by women in the kingdom and are also used in traditional Malay dance performances.
studios in Sintang Regency, such as Nusantara, Sultan Nata, and Bhayangkara studios. The observations made in the three studios aimed to find and see the potential of Malay traditional dances that still exist and develop and to see how many studios still know about the Jepin Tali dance. The choreographer also made direct observations to Belitang District, Sekadau Regency to review the Jepin Tali Airplane dance which is still developing in the area which is used as a reference and comparison in the next stage.

The third step is to look for references to the structure of the dance performance by reviewing several references related to the Jepin Tali dance. Written data extracting was carried out on several scientific works related to other types of Jepin Tali dance in West Kalimantan. Some of the articles reviewed by the choreographer were Devi Pratiwi's research entitled “Struktur Penyajian Tari Jepin Tali Bintang di Kota Pontianak Kalimantan Barat” (The Structure of the Presentation of the Jepin Tali Bintang Dance in Pontianak City, West Kalimantan) in 2017, and “Analisis Pola Ikat pada Tari Jepin Tali Bui Kelurahan Batu Layang Kecamatan Pontianak Utara” (Analysis of the Ikat Pattern of the Jepin Tali Bui Dance in Batu Layang Village, North Pontianak District) compiled by Dewi Novitasari in 2017. In addition, reviewing videos related to the Jepin Tali dance performances such as on the Ikanmas Untan Youtube channel, Juhermi Thahir channel, and Wesyars channel.

After getting enough data and information, the writer as a choreographer looked for some students who already had experience in the field of dance that would later be involved in the training process in composing and reviving the Jepin Tali dance. It is also intended to motivate and increase the interest of the younger generation in preserving traditional dances.

When looking for dancers for this reconstruction process, the author had a little difficulty due to the conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic which made most students return to their hometowns. Some students who live in the city of Sintang have chosen to work part time during the pandemic. Of all the students who were
successfully recruited for this reconstruction process, they had knowledge of the basic movements of traditional Malay dances.

4.2. Foundations of Reconstruction

The Jepin Tali dance is a traditional Malay dance that has existed since the tribe Malay was in Sintang Regency. Widianti told about the existence of the lost Jepin Tali dance and hoped that the dance would come back to life. Hery Samsudin (Malay art expert) conveyed about the origins of the Jepin Tali dance. According to Hery Samsudin that the Jepin Tali dance performance was very popular in its time, because of the value of togetherness (gotong royong) contained in the show. This Jepin Tali dance was last seen around the 1990s (Samsudin, 2021).

Jepin Tali dance is one of the cultural heritages that originally had a function as a medium of da’wah. In addition, it also functions as public entertainment in Sintang Regency, such as the Jepin dance in general. This is in line with the opinion of A. Muin Ikram that the Malay Jepin dance that developed in West Kalimantan serves, among other things, to entertain. Jepin dance also spreads the da’wah of Islam through poetry sung in Jepin dance music (Ikram, 2000). The values and norms contained in the Jepin Tali dance are very important for the survival of the community to achieve social welfare.

The form of the Jepin Tali dance is a group dance. In English, group dance is also known as Group choreography where this dance is a dance with more than two dancers. In the Jepin Tali dance, it can be presented with more than two dancers and can be even or odd. Jepin Tali dance can also be performed by female and male dancers and can also be a mixture of men and women.

The property used in this dance is the rope. The number of dancers in the show will determine the number of ropes used and how the final result is woven. The more dancers, the better the resulting of weaving. The technique used in the rope weaving process is divided into two, namely the first the rope can be hung on the stage in the center of the stage and the second technique is the rope can be tied around the neck.
on one of the dancers. The fashion in the Jepin Tali dance is the *baju kurung* used by women and the *teluk belanga* used by men. In ancient times for facial makeup only used powder and lipstick as lip tint so as not to look pale.

4.3. **Reconstruction Steps**

After conducting initial research and the results are then used as a basis for the next stage. The reconstruction stage is the choreographer's creative process in selecting, composing, and developing the Jepin Tali dance. The choreographers carried out several stages in recomposing the Jepin Tali dance in Sintang Regency, namely:

1) **Determining the Theme**

The first step in the arrangement is to determine the theme. The theme chosen is humans as social beings, which refers to the original theme, namely togetherness (*gotong royong*) and tolerance. The theme is taken from public relations that cannot be separated from each other, humans cannot live alone. In determining this theme, the choreographer aims to revive the message contained in the Jepin Tali dance in the past.

2) **Composing Movement**

The second step that the choreographer does is compose a series of movements. Movement is the main medium of a dance performance. In an effort to reconstruct the Jepin Tali dance, there are many challenges and obstacles faced by the choreographer, one of which is the limitation of references and sources. Manuscripts records of the movement of the Jepin Tali dance were not found, nor were the dancers that many of them had died. The Jepin Tali dance was never seen again, so the regeneration process was interrupted. However, the limitation of references does not mean that it loses its footing in the effort to reconstruct this Jepin Tali dance.
In composing the variety of movements, the choreographer used the results of interviews with Malay art experts in Sintang Regency, namely Hery Samsudin and Gusti M Fadli. The Jepin Tali dance performance is considered too monotonous because it only has 3 types of movement and only 1 movement part. For this reason, in this preparation stage, several types of movement are added to make it more varied and interesting.

At this stage, the choreographer conducts a movement search by exploring the vocabulary movements of the Malay tradition obtained from observations of audio-visual references as well as suggestions and opinions of local artists and dancers. From this exploration process, the choreographer got 13 kinds of Malay traditional movements: serai serumpun, tahtim, langkah tari, sikapur sirih, langkah lembut, Jepin tarik, Jepin loncat, Jepin sirang (separate Jepin), lenggang, Jepin gantung putar, kembang payong (umbrella flower), joget, and langkah serong.

From the results of these explorations, a variety of movements were selected and added to the structure of the Jepin Tali dance at the beginning and end. This is done with the intention that the Jepin Tali dance is not monotonous anymore, because at first this dance only had one part, namely the core (weaving the rope).

To maintain the characteristics of the Jepin Tali dance, the choreographer still places 3 types of bejepen, double step, and langkah angkat/gantung (lifting/hanging steps) in the dance structure. Of the total 16 types of movement, all of them are used and divided into several types of movement in each dance structure. In order to make the Jepin Tali dance more interesting, a floor pattern was also developed by referring to the information obtained from the sources. In addition, movement development is also carried out in hand movements and facing directions.

Finally, the series of movement are arranged into 3 parts, namely the beginning, the core, and the closing. At the beginning, the arrangement of movement

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5 Variety of movement inspired by nature. With the movement of the legs crossed and opened, it is done with the left foot crossed and then opened which is repeated 2 times to the right first and then done again crosswise to the left 2 times.
6 The opening and closing movements of the Jepin dance.
7 The movement takes two steps to the right or to the left with the last movement closing the feet by touching the ankles, the knee position is facing forward, the knee of the foot is slightly bent.
uses 9 kinds of movement, including *langkah sorong, Jepin loncat, Jepin gantung putar, serai serumpun, injit-injit, langkah tari, sikapur sirih*, molek dan *tahtim penuh*. The core is divided into 3 parts, namely *anyam tali* (woven rope), *selingan* (interlude), dan *membuka anyaman tali* (open the woven rope). Meanwhile, the closing section uses 4 different movements, namely *langkah serong* (oblique steps), *langkah tari* (dance steps), *Jepin loncat* (jumping Jepin), dan *Jepin Tarik* (pulling Jepin).

![Figure 1. Routine practice of the Jepin Tali dance reconstruction process](Photo: Gery, 2022)

3) **Determining the Floor Pattern**

The floor pattern is an important thing in the development carried out in reconstructing the Jepin Tali dance. The process of compiling the floor pattern is carried out simultaneously with the arrangement of movement. This is done so that time is used more efficiently. At the stage of preparing the floor pattern, the number of dancers greatly affects the floor pattern that will be used. Because there are 4 dancers, the floor pattern is simple, but plays high-low levels in the arrangement. The floor pattern arrangement uses frequently used patterns such as squares, parallelograms, and circles.

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8 Variety of Malay traditional movements that are usually used in welcoming events.
a. The floor pattern in the beginnings

1. Langkah sorong
2. Jepin loncat
3. Langkah sorong
4. Jepin gantung putar
5. Serai serumpun
6. Injit-Injit
7. Sikapur sirih
8. Langkah tari
9. Molek
10. Tohtim penuh

b. The floor pattern in the core

1. Bejepen & double step
2. Langkah lembut
3. Tahtim setengah dan serai serumpun
c. The floor pattern in the end

4) Determining Accompaniment/Music

The process of determining musical accompaniment is carried out after a series of movement has been arranged and structured. The design of the musical
accompaniment was assisted by Anggi Renaldhi who is a student of the Ethnomusicology Department of ISI Surakarta who also comes from Sintang Regency. As for determining the poems to be used, Gusti M Fadli’s advice was very helpful in this reconstruction, so that the poems used did not deviate from the original performances of a long time ago. At first the only musical instruments used were Gambus and Meruas (Marwas). In order for the reconstructed dance to be less monotonous and more interesting, additional musical instruments were used.

The musical instruments used in the reconstruction of the Jepin Tali dance are bedug, accordions, rebana, maracas, tambourines, cymbals, basses, and flutes. While the poems used are Siti Zubaidah's poems that the series of sentences were composed by Datok Gila who came from Sekadau Regency.

Figure 3. Music instruments 1) Meruas, 2) Gambus, 3) akordion, 4) simbal and tamborin, 5) rebana, 6) bedug, 7) marakas, 8) bass, dan 9) suling/flute
(Photo: Gusti M Fadli, 2022)

The distribution of accompaniment in the Jepin Tali dance is in accordance with the division in a series of movement, namely:

a) Music intro, enter the first part, namely intro music. The intro music starts before
the dancers enter the stage and only uses punches from the Meruas instrument and the strings of Gambus. This intro music is used as a marker for dancers to get ready, and a marker for the audience that the dance performance is about to start.

b) The initial song (opener), in this early part, several additional musical instruments have been used, including Gambus, rebana, bedug, cymbal, maracas, bass, flute, tambourine and accordion using the accompaniment pattern from Siti Zubaidah's poetry.

c) The core song (the core/weaving the rope), this is the core part of the Jepin Tali Dance. This section has used vocals by containing recitation of poetry that contains education for the community to continue to help each other and work together and uphold an attitude of tolerance.

d) The final song (closing), at the end of this the tempo of the music used is in a dance tone that describes the joy of the community after finishing the woven rope. The accompaniment of the Jepin Tali dance has a characteristic that is the use of Siti Zubaidah's poetry. The poetry in Malay music is generally influenced by the teachings of Islam. The poetry in the Jepin Tali dance uses the prefix of a sentence that contains the word "Bismillah". This poem is the creation of Datok Gila from Sekadau Regency. The following are the sentences of Siti Zubaidah's poetry and the musical notation.

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\begin{align*}
Dengan bismillah kami ucapkan \\
Puji dan syukur kami panjatkan \\
Menghatur sembah salam penghormatan \\
Kepada semua hadirin sekalian (1x)
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Bergotong royong kita tingkatkan \\
Saling membantu sesama insan \\
Janganlah kita saling menjatuhkan \\
untuk mencari nama dan kekuasaan (1x)
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Marilah kita duduk bersama \\
Tidak membedakan miskin dan kaya \\
Bahu membahu dalam berkerja \\
Untuk kemajuan kita semua (2x)
\end{align*}
\]
Kami semua para wanita
Ikut melestarikan seni dan budaya
Adat dan tradisi sebagai pusaka
Sebagai pedoman dalam berkarya (2x)

a) Music notation beginnings
b) Core section notation

The above notation was composed by Anggi Renaldhi as the music director for the reconstruction of this Jepin Tali dance.

5) Determining on Make-up and Clothing

During the process of designing make-up and clothing as well as the number of rope properties, the reconstruction was assisted by Widianti as the head of the Nusantara studio. Initially, the clothes used in the Jepin Tali dance were baju kurung (for women) and teluk belanga (for men). Because in the reconstruction of the Jepin Tali dance, only female dancers were used, then clothing was developed that combines men's and women's clothing. The merging is done by wearing pants and songket cloth which is usually used by men. The top of the clothing model developed additional clothing, equipment, and accessories. This is done so that the clothing looks more attractive and has its own characteristics, but does not eliminate the element of Malay clothing. Meanwhile, there is no change in the make-up, that is, the make-up used is beautiful by emphasizing the lines of the face.
Apart from make-up and clothing, they are the main elements in this dance. The Jepin Tali dance uses a 2 cm rope property. Without the rope property, this dance would not be complete. Tali is the main material used to convey the meaning contained in the Jepin Tali dance. The number of ropes used in the Jepin Tali dance is 8 threads, each dancer holds or plays 2 ropes. The ropes used are given different colors on each rope, as a marker for dancers who will use the rope. The colors used on the rope include red, yellow, green, and blue. In addition, the coloring of this rope also serves to make the resulting woven rope more attractive and the woven motif visible.

6) Evaluation

After all the elements of the dance have been designed and arranged, then an evaluation is carried out by involving dancers, musicians, videographers, and the production team to obtain input and corrections. Furthermore, the choreographer together with the production team and videographer made preparations for the performance of the show. The results of the reconstruction of the Jepin Tali dance were performed online and offline.
4.4. Reconstruction Results

The Jepin Tali dance performance in Sintang Regency as a result of the reconstruction is divided into 3 parts, namely the beginning/opening, the core, and ending/the closing parts.

a) The Beginning

At the beginning, it starts with a Meruas\(^9\) punch and a string of Gambus as a sign that the show is starting and the dancers enter the stage. The range of movement used in this opening section consists of 7 types of movement. The addition of this opening section is intended as an illustration that the gotong royong (work together) and other activities that are deliberation in nature have a preparation stage and gather and interact with each other.

b) The Core

The core is further divided into 3 parts, namely the weaving of the rope, the interlude, and the opening of the weave. The core part is a picture of the community doing gotong royong. In the weaving section, the dancers begins with a full tahtim movement which then the dancer takes the rope, the movement used is bejepen by changing positions in a circular and crossing which is repeated 17 times to get a long weave. During the process of weaving the rope, Siti Zubaidah's poems began to be sung until the weaving process was complete. In the interlude, starting from the dancers who put the property on the floor, then the dancers move backwards and enter into other types of movement, namely, soft steps, half tahtim, lenggang, kembang payong, dance steps, Jepin sirang, and molek\(^{10}\). The part of opening the woven rope begins with a full tahtim movement, then the dancer takes the property back, then opens the weaving with a double step movement in a circular and crossing by repeating the pattern of weaving the rope upside down so that the weaving can be opened.

\(^9\) Percussion instrument in Jepin dance
\(^{10}\) Move backwards to form the letter "S"
c) Closing

This final part begins with the dancers tying 1 rope to each other's waist and then taking the hanging rope. Then the dancers move using 4 kinds of traditional Malay movement which are developed by playing a rope. Each dancer holds 2 ropes. The ending part closes with the dancers posing separately in the condition of a rope wrapped around each other's body. This illustrates that the ties of friendship will not be broken if everyone respects social values, in which there are also values of gotong royong, mutual assistance (helping each other), and tolerance.

The offline performance of the reconstruction of the Japin Tali dance is held at the Malay Palace or the Al-Mukarramah Sintang Palace. The online performance recordings can be accessed on the page https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGU4O5yogww.

![Figure 5. The reconstructed Jepin Tali dance performance](Photo: Anggi, 2022)

5. Conclusion

Based on the research and the reconstructed dance works, it can be concluded that the reconstruction process of the Jepin Tali dance begins with research and continues with reconstruction. Initial research was conducted through interviews, field observations, reviewing the literature and audio-visuals. The results of the initial research were used as material to reconstruct the Jepin Tali dance which had been suspended for a long time.
The dance reconstruction process is carried out through stages, namely determining the theme, arranging the movement, determining the floor pattern, determining the make-up and clothing, and evaluating. This dance form is a group dance with a total of 4 female dancers, and the structure is divided into 3 parts, namely the beginning, core, and closing. In addition, using the property of 8 colored ropes that are woven and accompanied by Siti Zubaidah's lyrical music which contains education about gotong royong and tolerance starting with Bismillah. The recitation of the poem contains sentences that do not distinguish between poor and rich and other differences, with the hope of improving the welfare of the community.

6. References


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