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Title of Thesis : **Ritual Performance, Cosmology, and Identity of the Balinese: A Study of Barong**

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## ABSTRACT

The research as presented here is a pilot version of a Ph.D. thesis proposal, entitled, *“Ritual Performance, Cosmology, and Identity of Balinese: A Study of Barong”*. The research attempts to explore and interpret the semiotics of Barong Dance by applying the methods of ethnographical research and the theories of Performing Arts Communications with particular reference to traditional media. The research begins with the analysis of the structure of the Barong Dance, the Barong belief system, vision and cultural space in the context of social, economic and political life of Balinese communities. The expected results of the research are the identification of the concept of *Dualism* and the balance of power relations in Balinese cosmology, as being basic philosophies of Bali belief system and traditional doctrine, reflected in the key *“signs”*; masks and costumes. The research findings lead to the hypothesis that Balinese communities, which inherited the Barong dance from the past and still performs and preserves it until today, may have a close relationship with the community structure seen as a *clan system*. The sacred rituals of the Barong and Rangda masks obviously reflect the Balinese belief in the presence of Deities as representation of ancestral spirits and animistic beliefs, including *myths*. These are related to the *collective unconsciousness* and to archetypes which portray the depth-psyche of mankind, communicated by story, plot, characters, and performance.

**Furthermore, the research attempts to study the identity formation of Barong Dance which was formulated to satisfy current social and psychological needs and has become an invented tradition to cope with present-day cultural tourism.**

**Intensive research in at least three Balinese communities is planned for a comparative study in order to justify the research assumptions. The study expects to prove that the assumptions regarding the interpretation of the dualistic belief system, its semiotics and concept of archetypal patterns, including the relationship to Balinese clan system are accurate. It is estimated that, through times and social changes, Barong dance in the current situation is not just used for communication with the deities as traditional medium, but it hides the defense mechanism of the Balinese Ego from globalization. Also patterns of archetypes still function within the Balinese collective unconsciousness in each community. It is anticipated that these in-depth hidden structures can be traced and tracked only by applying psychological and anthropological approaches. For accuracy and concord findings, an interdisciplinary participatory research, intensive fieldwork, and postmodern application need to be conducted.**

***Keywords: belief system, dualism, animism, ancestral spirit, archetype, defense mechanism of the ego, ritual, dance, performance, globalization***