



Characteristics of *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* Dance Motions Created by S. Ngaliman Condropangrawit

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe the characteristics of *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance motions created by S. Ngaliman Condropangrawit. This research uses descriptive qualitative method. The research subjects are three figures who are familiar with the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance. Data collection techniques used the method of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation study. Data analysis techniques were conducted through the stages of data reduction, data description, and conclusion drawing. Data validation was conducted through the triangulation of sources. The results show that the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance is a Surakarta style traditional dance that combines the feeling of classical dance motions of the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace with the sense of motion of Kemlayan village artists. The main idea of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance was inspired by Bedaya Bedhah Madiun. The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance range of motions was taken from the *Srimpi Sangupati*, the *Srimpi Gondokusuma*, and the *Srimpi Anglirmendung* dances range of motions. The characteristics of the range of motions found in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance are: 1) Sekaran Lara Retna Dumilah which is a development of the sekaran laras sawit; 2) the standing style sekaran lenggut which is a development of the *lenggut* on *sembahan trapsila* and *sembahan jengkeng*. The two characteristics of the range of motion are not found in the other dances.

Keywords: characteristics, dance motion, Bedayan Retna Dumilah

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INTRODUCTION

Art is an expression of the human spirit that is manifested in various forms of artworks. Art creation occurs because of the process of creativity, taste, and intention. Sense arises because of an instinctual drive called will (*karsa*). According to (Soedarsono, 1996), *karsa* can be individual or collective, depending on the environment and culture of the community. On the other hand (Kayam, 1981) said that art is an

expression of creativity from culture itself, a society that supports culture and thus technique creates, provides opportunities to move, maintain, transmit, develop and then create the new ones.

As time goes by, art develops more rapidly. One form of art is dance, which has an essential role in people's lives. Widaryanto (1988) said that dance is expressive given movements created by humans to be enjoyed with taste.

Based on the pattern he worked on,

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dances in Indonesia can be divided into two namely traditional and new creation dances. Traditional dances can be divided into classical traditional, traditional folk and primitive dances (Suparjan, 1982). It is also stated that classical dance is a dance that has experienced high artistic crystallization that has existed since the feudal era. Classical dance has certain standardized standards that must not be violated. According to (Soeryobrongto, 1974), dance must be an expression of the soul, without the soul the dance will become less lively, hollow, and shallow, lack of character, and lack of style. There are various forms of classical traditional dance, such as the *Bedaya* dance, *Srimpi* dance, *wayang wong* (traditional drama performance), *Golek* (Wooden Puppet) dance, and so on. Of the many forms of classical traditional dances, one of them is the *Bedaya* dance.

The *Bedaya* dance is a form of classical dance performed by nine female dancers in the same clothes and makeup, and each dancer has a different role. *Bedaya* dance was born, lived, and developed in the palace; in general, this dance is the legitimacy of the king. *Bedaya* dance is one of the ritual dances that is full of moral values and messages, so that it is natural that this dance will be retained, especially in the palace surroundings of both the Surakarta and Yogyakarta palace (Sunaryadi, 2013, p. 146). However, over time, *Bedaya* dance developed and spread widely outside the palace walls. This is marked by the making of *Bedaya* dance as subject matter in art schools such as the Karawitan Indonesia Middle School (SMKI) and the tertiary level that has a major in dance. However, there are *Bedaya* dances that are not allowed to come out of the palace walls, namely the *Bedaya Ketawang* dance (Surakarta palace), and the *Bedaya Semang* (Yogyakarta palace), because until now the two *Bedaya* dances are sacred heirlooms (Santoso, 1990. P. 15).

Talking about the *Bedaya* dance inside the palace, there is one style of *Bedaya* dance that is outside the walls of the palace. It is the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance. *Bedaya*

Retna Dumilah dance is one example of classical Javanese dances originating from outside the walls of the palace. This dance was created by a master of dance from Surakarta, namely S. Ngaliman Candrapangrawit in 1978. This dance was created upon the request from a prince from the Surakarta Kasunanan palace. The composition of the *Bedayan* dance is not the same as the *Bedaya* dance in general. The number of *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dancers is seven, while *Bedaya* in general has 9 dancers. For this reason, this dance is called *Bedayan* which means artificial *Bedaya*. *Bedaya* dance danced by nine female dancers is a dance born in the palace and created by the kings. In general, the *Bedaya* dance is a legacy of the king. As the statement of S. Ngaliman Candrapangrawit conveyed to Haryono, that those who are entitled to compose the *Bedaya* and *Srimpi* dance are actually only the palace (Keraton), therefore the composition of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* is not the same as the *Bedaya* dance in general (interview with Mr. Haryono on 15 September 2014). The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance motions are taken from the *Srimpi Sangupati*, the *Srimpi Gandokusuma*, and the *Srimpi Anglirmendung* dance motions. The range of motions was rearranged and the composition was simplified. The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance absolutely demands more cohesiveness and quality of motion that is inseparable from predetermined rules. Even though the arrangement of motions in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance was simplified, it still adheres to the rules in the Surakarta palace. Based on these descriptions, researchers are interested in studying more deeply the characteristics of *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance motions.

Research on the *Bedaya* dance outside the palace has been carried out by Ika Ayu Kuncara Ningtyas in 2018 with the title "*Bedhaya* Sukoharjo Compaction by M. T.H Sri Mulyani", the article explained that the compaction of the *Bedhaya* Sukoharjo dance was carried out with the aim to meet the needs of performances outside the palace walls. The motions motive has been compacted by reducing the duration

of the number of repetitions of the motives associated with changing the forefront and reducing the amount of the *gongan*. The factors influence the compaction of *Bedhaya* Sukoharjo dance consist of internal and external factors. Internal factors within the artist are experience. M.TH. Sri Mulyani as a *Bedhaya* dancer wanted to display a shorter *Bedhaya* dance duration of her performance which was related to the need for performances outside the palace walls (Ningtyas, 2018).

Character is a reflection of the unity of working on the basic elements of dance that form the beauty of a dance Tasman (2008. P. 19). These properties are formed in addition to the factors of space and time. The character creator in a dance is not always done by a person but more than one person. It is also stated that the character is the behavior or behavior of actions that reflect his soul.

Exploring the characterization and character of each character in a dance performance is the most basic element because dance is a fulfillment of the needs of artistic expression that is able to arouse and develop a typology of characterization (Sedyawati, 1993, p. 8). It is also stated that the typology of disposition, in Javanese performing arts was developed broadly, not only the visual system that was worked on, but also how to move and the range of motion and tone and vibration of sound were all designed with reference to the characterization system.

Soedarsono (1985. p. 3) said that one characteristic of classical Javanese dance is that each form of dance must depict certain characters. Based on the character of motion, it can be divided into two, namely feminine motions and masculine motions (Soetedjo, 1983, p. 4). It was also said that feminine motions have the following characteristics: small or narrow volume of motions, low leg raise, low arm or arm raise, and slow motion. Whereas masculine motions have the following characteristics: large and wide volume of motion, high leg raise, high arm or arm raise, and strong and hard motions. For this reason,

the main material required for dance is the human body.

Dance is an expression tool or as a means by which an artist communicates with others (connoisseurs). As an expression tool, dance is capable to create a description of the motion that can make the audience sensitive to something around him. All the motions around us can be used as a source of dance motion ideas (Suzanne, 2014), a music and dance history expert from Germany, said that dance is a rhythmic movement. This definition was sharpened by (Soedarsono, 1996) who said that dance is an expression of the human soul expressed by beautiful rhythmic movements. On the other hand (Sedyawati, 1981) stated that dance is a range of physical activities whose ultimate goal is the expression of beauty.

All definitions put forward by dance experts are principally true since, in reality, this dance is alive because of people's souls and feelings. In other words, whether dance is alive or not depends on how the dancer plays his character in dancing.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is defined as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from observed people and behavior. According to Moleong (2017) qualitative research is often used to examine phenomena in natural social and cultural life. With this approach, it is expected to reveal and describe the characteristics of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance motions.

The data used in this study was written documentation, and videos relating to the characteristics of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance, as well as the facts found in the field while this research was ongoing. To obtain accurate data the data sources taken were as follows: data about informants (resource persons), the next data was written data in the form of books about the style of S. Ngaliman dance, as well as notebooks that were in the resource

persons. Besides, the data was in the form of a video.

The data was then collected. Data collected through interviews and observations was referred to as primary data, while data collected through documentation was secondary data which was to support the validity of primary data. To obtain accurate data the source of data taken was data about the informants, while the informants were chosen by selecting people who could provide accurate data. The informants included Mr. Haryono, M.Hum, Mr. Bambang Tri Atmojo, and Ms. Hartiwi. Meanwhile, the documentation was taken from video recordings and records available at the resource persons.

Data collection techniques in this study were interviews and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with informants who were considered to have a lot of knowledge about the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance. Meanwhile, the documentation was carried out observing the form of *sekaran-sekaran gerak* in *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance in detail so that it is easier to detail the existing data. In this study, the researcher is the main instrument or human instrument, with a set of knowledge about the characteristics of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance with the help of interview and documentation guides.

The data obtained was then descriptively and qualitatively analyzed as follows: a) data reduction by summarizing the main things in accordance with the research topic, b) description of the data by examining data obtained from various sources, c) drawing conclusions that are, the results of the reduction were grouped into units, then categorized or grouped and then carried out separation according to the theme.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Background of the Creation of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* Dance

Bedayan Retna Dumilah dance was composed in 1978 by S. Ngaliman Candrapangrawit, a master of dance from Surakarta.

This dance was created upon the request from Lt. Gen. Jatikusuma (a prince from the Kasunanan Surakarta Palace) in the context of an art mission to the Netherlands. The main idea of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance was inspired by the *Bedaya Bedhah Madiun* dance. This is because S. Ngaliman was impressed with Retna Dumilah's character in the *Bedaya Bedhah Madiun* dance, which displayed her majesty. In the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* created by S. Ngaliman Candrapangrawit, in addition to highlighting the figure of Retna Dumilah, the figure of Panembahan Senopati was also presented.

Variety of *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance motions were taken from *Srimpi Sangupati*, *Srimpi Gondokusuma*, and *Srimpi Anglirmendung* dance motions. The range of motion was reprocessed and simplified and changes were made to the composition. The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance is performed by seven female dancers, this is different from the *Bedaya* dance in general. The *Bedaya* dance is generally performed by nine female dancers.

The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* theme is the theme of love between Retna Dumilah and Panembahan Senopati. In *Bedayan* dance Retna Dumilah does not use terms such as *endhel*, *apit ngajeng*, *batak*, *buncit*, *gulu*, and so on. *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance work included Sekar Ageng Tebu Sauyun's vocal that has never been seen in *Bedaya* dance in general. *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance is a form of dance that is packaged simply, and not the sacred one. This dance can be learned by anyone who wants to learn it. Even *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance is still used as lecture material in the Department of Dance Education Faculty of Language and Art, Yogyakarta State University.

Characteristics of Movement of *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* Dance

Bedayan Retna Dumilah dance was created outside the palace walls by S. Ngaliman Candrapangrawit. As explained above that the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance was created at the request of a prince

from the Surakarta Kasunanan palace. By S. Ngaliman the range of motion in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance was taken from the range of motions in the *Srimpi Sangupati*, *Srimpi Gondokusuma*, and *Srimpi Anglirmendung* dances which then were simplified in terms of composition. S. Ngaliman made simplifications and changes in terms of composition, but now they still adhere to traditional dance waton. Therefore, the characteristics of dance motions found in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance are still very strong in reference to the Surakarta Keraton Kasunanan tradition despite having its own taste, namely the taste of Kampung Kemlayan dance.

Seeing the characteristics of dance is needed by analyzing motion, because dance ideas are channeled through them through motion. Thus, the discussion always considers the motions present in dance (Wahyudianto, 2006). Likewise, the characteristics of dance motions in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance are something that is important to note.

Related to the character problem, in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance, the seven dancers are very emotionally connected to Retna Dumilah. Understanding the character is the meaning of a sense of beauty that radiates in the quality of the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance. The strength of the seven dancers' character in this dance is very visible in the dance motions which are closely related to the floor pattern. Therefore, the meaning cannot be separated from the characters through the motions carried out. There are several patterns of motion nowadays in the *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance by S. Ngaliman Candrapangrawit including *Patetan Maju Gending*, *sembahan laras jengkeng*, *right laras Retna Dumilah*, *left laras Retna Dumilah*, *glebagan ogek lambung*, *golek iwak*, *ngunus cundrik*, *perangan kengser ukel manis*, *inserting the cundrik*, *nikelwarti sembah*, *lembahan maju mundur separuh*, *lelebotan*, *enjer*, *engkyek*, *nikelwarti*, *patetan mundur*.

Among the number of patterns that have been composed in the dance *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* is *sekar*an motion that has

special characteristics. *Sekar*an laras *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* is different from *sekar*an laras in common dances. The pattern of *sekar*an laras *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* is actually the creation of *sekar*an laras *sawit*, but it has been developed so that it has a different taste of *sekar*an laras *sawit* in other dances. The *sekar*an laras *Retna Dumilah* has soft or *banyumili* (flowing water) motion characteristics with a slow motion tempo. Standing up *Lenggut* is the development of *lenggut* on *sembahan trapsila* and *sembahan jengkeng*. The nature of this motion is weak, the focus of motion is on the head with the right hand position squeezed the shawl (*sampur*).



Figure 1. *Sekar*an laras *Retna Dumilah*
(Doc. Hartiwi, 2010)



Figure 2. *Lenggut* Motion
(Doc. Hartiwi, 2010)

CONCLUSION

The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance was created outside the palace walls precisely in Kemlayan Village, by S. Ngaliman Tjondropangrawit, a dance master from Surakarta in 1978 upon the request from

a prince from Kasunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat. This is something very positive, because with the creation of this *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance, it adds to the dance treasury. The *Bedayan Retna Dumilah* dance is danced by seven female dancers. This is different from the *Bedaya* dance in general which is usually danced by nine female dancers.

Bedayan Retna Dumilah dance is a combination of the classical dance motions of the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace with the motions of Kemlayan village artists who try to develop based on their own taste, so that the dance style of the Kemlayan village dance appears as reflected in the sense of dance motions by S. Ngaliman.

Characteristics of the motion patterns found in the *Bedayan* dance *Retna Dumilah* is *sekarang laras Retna Dumilah* which is the development of the *sekarang laras sawit*, and the standing up *sekarang lenggut* is the development of *lenggut* on *trapsila* and *jengkeng*. These two characteristics of the motion patterns are not found in other *Bedaya* dances.

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