

## THE ANALYSIS OF *SEKARTAJI*'S CHARACTER MOVEMENT IN *SEKARTAJI TANDHING* DANCE

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### ABSTRACT

The analysis of *Sekartaji Tandhing*'s movement in *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance aims at figuring out the factual factors and aspects of the characters in the movement found in *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance. By employing Agus Tasman's Analysis of Dance Moves and Character, including space, time, energy, movement, and a character concept consisting of typology, character, and temperament, it was found that the *Sekartaji Tandhing*'s characters met a good quality of character and movement analysis. The inner and outer reflection used as aspects in analyzing the *Sekartaji Tandhing*'s characters discovered an aesthetic point that its beauty can be felt and was scientifically justified.

**Keywords:** Analysis, Movement, Character, *Sekartaji*'s Character

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

The story of Panji is one of the wealth of Indonesia's literature that has grown since *Daha Kediri Kingdom*'s era and developed rapidly during the *Majapahit Kingdom* era. This story is spread throughout the archipelago to several Southeast Asian countries. It is also well-known during the *Majapahit* era and because of that, the cultural palace and the story on the reliefs of *Majapahit* Temple depicted the Panji story. Along with the expansion of

*Majapahit*'s power in the conquest of Bali island in 1364 AD, for instance, the story of Panji spread to other areas in the Indonesian archipelago. Its story was later known in the mainland of Southeast Asia (Kieven. 2014. pp. 28-29).

The story of Panji is an elaboration of royal history story and literature. The story about *Raden Panji Inu Kertapati*, the son of King *Jenggala Prabu Lembu amiluhur*, and *Candrakirana Princess Dewi Sekartaji*, the daughter of *Raja Daha Kadiri, Prabu Lembu merdhadhu*,

have inspired many actors as a source of cultivating artworks (Dance Arts, Theater Arts, Fine Arts, Literary Arts, Music Arts) and as the sources of literature review.

The point of Panji's story is about the love between *Raden Panji* and *Dewi Candrakirana/Dewi Sekartaji* where they experienced trials before finally united until they brought down the kings of Java (the golden age of the *Majapahit* kingdom). As Kieven argues:

*In Java, well-known poets, such as Ranggawarsita or Sunan Pakubuwana IV of Surakarta, composed many new Panji stories, such as Jayakusuma which became part of the Surakarta literature that spread in the early 19th century. All of these stories, whether from Bali, Malay, or Java itself, are set against classical Javanese backgrounds. Panji's story tells of Prince Panji's adventures to get back his fiancée, Princess Candrakirana. "Panji" is a title that is carried in front of his name. In modern Javanese, 'Panji' means 'flag' or 'panji'. In the story, Prince Panji – in Javanese 'Raden Panji' – has various names, such as Panji Jayengtilem or Panji Wangbang Wideya. The princess also appears with different names, for example, Raden Sekartaji or Raden Galuh. Panji comes from the Kingdom of Jenggala / Kuripan, while Candrakirana is*

*a princess from Daha / Kediri. These kingdoms correspond to **historical kingdoms** that played an important role in **Majapahit politics** (Kieven. 2014. pp. 29-30)*

One part of Panji's story, '*Wadal wredi*', draws the researcher's attention to conduct this study. In "*Panji Suatu Transformasi Nilai Sejarah*" book by Soenarto Timoer, it is stated that '*Wadalwredi*' also called *Dewi Surengrono*, *Thothok Kerot*, is actually a beautiful princess with an ambitious character like *Buto Repan*. '*Wadalwredi*' was jealous of *Dewi Candrakirana/Dewi Sekartaji* who was very loved by *Raden PanjiInu Kertapati*, so she turned herself into *Dewi Candrakirana/Dewi Sekartaji*, and removed the real *Dewi Candrakirana/Dewi Sekartaji* into the forest.

This story became the inspiration for the choreography of the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance produced by the Dance Study Program at the Sekolah Tinggi Kesenian Wilwatikta Surabaya. It was done in the form of a 'Dramatic Pairing' choreography with two characters, that was a calm and

prestigious character in the real *Sekartaji* and the flirty, coquettish, and grumpy character in *Sekartaji memba*. The movement and music design are oriented toward East Javanese traditions (*Tayub Kediri, Jaranan Kediri, Malang Topeng Wayang*, and East Javanese *wayang* puppets), while the elements of fashion are designed fashionably and are still oriented towards East Javanese traditions such *asrapek, sembung, ilat-ilatan*.

This study is intended to provide academic literature about the aesthetics of *Sekartaji figure* in the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance by employing Agus Tasman's Analysis of Dance Moves and Character, including space, time, energy, element movement, a character concept consisting of typology, nature, and temperament.

Based on the background of the study, a research question was formulated as follows: "How is the analysis of *Sekartaji's* character movement in *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance?"

## METODOLOGY

### 1.2 Literature Review

#### 1.2.1 A Movement Theory

The writer chose a theoretical framework for a movement related to the discussed object. A movement is an action of moving from one place to other places, from one point to other points (Wahyudiyanto, 2008:14). A movement is also a transition in place or position which happen once or many times (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, Balai Pustaka Jakarta, 1985: 104).

A movement indicates a sign of life. In our daily life, a movement becomes the basic thing that is inseparable from us. An energetic person indeed uses some movements to do his or her activities.

Artists move their souls and imagination as the beginning their works for the sake of audiences' life (A. Tasman, 2014:1). These artists use the movements creatively in their works to show the meaning of beauty. There are four basic concepts of movement in a dance movement; energy, space, time, and material.

#### 1. Energy (force)

Energy is the capability to do a force and how a shape is formed. There are several kinds of energy in a movement: natural and technological

energy. However, the energy in the character movement does not come from either natural or technological that penetrates the muscles. Instead, it comes from the human nature starting from the beating heart to the energy of life. The energy we felt when doing nothing comes from the heart beating energy. However, the energy in the expressive movement does not only come from the heart but is also illuminated by the feeling and soul to a certain degree. Thus, the involvement of feeling and soul in the energy of a perfect technique will animate the movement to life. Those energies will cause a certain movement to have its character that represents one's personality. Energy in a movement for a beautiful character is always measured by the artist since it is not merely from the heart capacity. Therefore, in dancing, no matter how basic the movement is, it will have no aesthetic meaning or character if there is no balance with the

other elements (Tasman, 2014:13 -14 ).

## **2. Space**

Space can be said to be a vehicle with no limit system. Subjectively, a limit depends on the range horizon of vision. Meanwhile, the objective limit is a rule or concept that is used and understood by many. The limit and 'vehicle' of space in dance movement are intentionally prepared by the choreographer or the dancers to embody the powerful material during the process in time. The element of space acts as a place to accommodate and confirm the materials in it. In this place, you will see some positions; center, front edge, front middle, middle side, or other areas in which each of them affects the energy of the material. The existence of space and material will attract each other and that makes the material looks smaller in a big space, and vice versa (Tasman, 2014:15).

## **3. Time**

Time is non-physical discourse to accommodate a

process. It is firm, clear, and even not compromised to measure the speed when processing the form. Because of that, time does not only explain when the process is started but also how long the process is when forming an object. The clear and unequivocal nature of time make it does not only explain the start and end of a form but also record the dynamics of the process and how a form takes place carefully. It should not be forgotten that this life cannot be separated by rhythm. It is the one that makes things move and create a mystery making life more interesting. The movement as a sign of life causing it is determined by a human being, especially the dynamic of artists. However, every transition that happened remains meaningful since it also records the rhythm of a shape (Tasman, 2014:16 ).

John Martin in "The Modern Dance" suggests that movement is the basis and is viewed as the most elementary physique experience of human

life. A motion does not only exist in pulses throughout the body to let humans live but also in the expressions of all human emotional experiences. The elements of movement are rhythm, tempo, tensibility (the pressure in line movement), shape movement, color movement, motif movement, and volume movement (Wahyudiyanto, 2009:4).

At the level of quality, time identifies how long or short the duration of something is. Meanwhile, at the level of quantitative, it is measured in hours, minutes, and seconds. At both qualitative and quantitative levels of a movement, time disposes the materials in space, when, and for how long these materials are presented. As a place to accommodate the process of shaping, time is involved in the dynamic of how a character is created (Tasman, 2014:17).

#### **4. Material**

Material is something that will be used to create a shape for a specific purpose.

Something is called material because it is waiting to be processed as something else depending on one's goal. Therefore, it has a temporary meaning since it does not have any function yet. An individual can do any movement activities with his or her limbs depending on the purpose, for example, different jumping movements. Everyone can move their bodies as a medium for certain purposes and they also create movements using any materials for different purposes. In addition to using body materials, choreographers use or complement the movement creation with other materials for choreography. Therefore, in analyzing the character movement, it should not only pay attention to body material, but also the type, nature, and quality of non-body material which also has a role in the shape and character. (Tasman. 2014. 12-13)

### 1.2.2. Characteristic

According to Agus Sujanto, a character comes from Dutch meaning *characteriologie*. From its origin,

character means individual characteristic and *logie* means science, so *characteriologie* is the study of individual characteristics. The word *characteriologie* comes from the Greek word '*charassein*' which means to scribble or scratch. The scratches here are the marks created or left by someone's action. Then since it is meaningful, the scratch becomes a stamp representing a person's soul through his behavior. Thus, a person's behavior or way of acting will leave scratches as well as become a meaningful stamp reflecting his soul. During the time development, a character has **typology, temperament, and nature** meanings (Sujanto in Tasman. 2014. 18-19).

### 1. Typology

The first meaning of character here is characterized based on the physical constitution, that is a physiological state of an individual because of its nature. Those who are slim and plump have different natures. The difference comes from body construction, for instance, the imbalance between legs, body,

and head. Those with slim bodies will move more energetically than those with plump bodies.

## **2. Temperament**

A character in the sense of temperament is a person's mental and psychological traits caused by the presence of substances in his or her body that affects their behavior. The definition of temperament and personality are often confused, although it has different meanings between the two. Temperament is a disposition that is closely related to biological or physiological factors that have undergone little modification in its development. The hereditary or basic factors have a more important role than other aspects of personality.

## **3. Nature**

A character in the sense of nature is a personal soul that reveals itself in all actions and statements. It is the behavior or attitude as a personal statement of his soul. It is believed that everyone has a permanent streak of the soul they were born with. Individual special traits can be said as innate traits. In other

words, a character is defined as a behavior, attitude, gestures, actions, and ways of behaving that during life are fixed and rooted in someone's body and soul; giving the overall impression that one is different from others.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The analyses of the movement and character were carried out by observing and communicating directly since what was analyzed by the character values is an experience of the beauty itself. The movement itself is temporary and dynamic, it is very easy to change. During the analysis, the researcher did some exploration to find a meaning of a character in non-verbal forms in which they are not easily captured by the senses or thought where the movement, doer, or time change.

Therefore, the analytical study was an exploration that must be carried out with various possibilities and if necessary by using the system. This exploration was quite difficult due to the possibilities in the shape that showed

up. Moreover, the character's movement was not always determined by the material but also by the power of the organization. In certain cases, it is not impossible for characters to be found carefully by the aggregation process. It was carried out by observation and various methods.

The exploration of the power source of form was carried out with the target object. Therefore, the analytical study began by observing the shape of the object thoroughly up to the smaller parts. The smaller data were also examined for all their characteristics and then grouped to conclude. If the object was a compilation of data, then the identification of the data must be done and then they must be grouped into similar groups to draw conclusions. If the object is still in shape or form, then the analytical study begins by unraveling them.

Describing a character's movement should be based on the observed facts. In the analysis, what is meant by an object is the shape and not the name of the movement. Therefore, what is meant by facts is the presentation of the form as the

object of analysis. The problem and the purpose of the analysis are to find out the factors and factual aspects of what reveal the character in the form of movement.

Thus, the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance would try to unravel several forms of movement and dancing aspects as an analytical material, to reveal the character as an aesthetic visualization of the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance.

A. Some movements becoming the focus of analysis are:

1. The movement at the beginning which is *maju beksan*
2. The movement in the *beksan* (1 movement motif)
3. The movement in the war section
4. The movement in the *mundur beksan*
5. The movement of connecting */singget*

### 1. The movement at the beginning which is *maju beksan*

When it is the *maju beksan* part, two slender dancers with a height of about 150 cm acting as *Sekartaji*, are side by side from front to back (dancer A in front, dancer B in back). Dancer A is the fake *Sekartaji* / *memba* (*wedal werdi* character), while dancer B is the real *Sekartaji*. They do the *Labas* movement, which is a movement of foot walking with a fast boost of energy, from the back left corner spatially within 8 seconds.

The body must be sturdy and keep looking straight ahead. Each of the dancers brings a *cundrik*. Then, they do the stabbing movement to each other twice (*tusukjeblosan*) towards the shoulder (spatially) with a fast boost of energy within 2 seconds. Next, dancer B retreats to the back left corner while dancer A *labasto* the front right corner, with flowing energy in 30 second rhythm. *Cundrik trap pundak* position. The *cundrik* is inserted in the *warangka* while two dancers

perform a *singget* connecting movement, then *tanjak*.

The impression of the shape obtained is strong and firm since the spatial lines on the floor pattern are straight that cross/oblique. Moreover, the shape of the lines caused by the movement is also a straight line and the use of time is very fast with a strong impulse of breaking. La Meri mentions that straight lines have a strength containing an element of simplicity (La Meri in Soedarsono. 1975. 6)



**Picture 1.** The *maju beksan* part in *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance

This is different from the Malang-style of *Sekartaji* dance where the form of *maju beksan* uses a lot of curved designs and curved floor patterns so that it shares a calm impression.



**Picture 2.** *Maju Beksanin*  
*Sekartaji* dance of Malang's style

## 2. The movement in the *beksan*

In the *beksan* section, there are five types of movement but the researcher took one motive for the variety of movement, which is the *seblakan sampur* movement motif. The dancer stands *mendak* (the angle of the kneecap is bent 45 degrees), the right foot is *tanjak kanan* (the weight is on the left foot, the right leg is tilted to the right in front of the tip of the left foot, the left leg is tilted towards the left corner). The torso is upright holding back breath on the chest, the view focuses three

meters forward. The pattern of the arms is *menthang ngrayung trap cethik* / the tip of the pelvis. The right arm is towards the front right corner and the left arm is towards the front left corner. Spatially the position of dancer A is in the front right corner, while dancer B is in the back left corner.

The movement of the *seblakan sampur* on dancer A is carried out for 8 x 4 counts, with the details of a count 1 *seblak* right, count 2 *seblak* left, count 3-4 right and left swings. Meanwhile, for dancer B, the *seblakan sampur* movement is carried out for 4 x 8 counts, with details of a count of 1-2 *seblak sampur* right, a count of 3-4 *seblak sampur* left, a count of 5 *lenggut* on right, a count of 6 *lenggut* left, a count of 7 *lenggut* on right, a count of 8 *lenggut* on left. Thus, dancer A has faster and steady energy, while dancer B has more flowing energy and a slower tempo. The line pattern that appears in this technique is curved.

According to La Meri, the curved lines (in all forms except

the angular elements are smooth, soft, and can beautifully bring the audiences in their environment) (La Meri in Soedarsono. 1975. Pg. 25)



**Picture 3.** Thebeksan motif movement of *seblakan sampur*

### 3. The movement in the war section

There are three types of war in the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance. They are the *tangkepan* war, the *palaran* war, and the *jeblosan/brubuh* war. *Tangkepan* war is basically a war without the tools/properties, instead only use the arms or other body parts such as the feet, legs, or head. The movements performed between two dancers use opposite patterns in space, level, or line design. In the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance, the

researcher took *geretan* movement as an example.

The *geretan* movement is done by the two dancers by tiptoeing to the right for 4 counts and to the left for 4 counts, performed twice with a fast tempo and strong energy/energy boost. The position of the two dancers is in the center of the stage with the body facing forward but at different levels. Dancer A with a high level, and dancer B with a medium level. The hand pattern of dancer A is holding the shoulders of dancer B, while dancer B is holding the right arm and the left arm *ngolong sampur*. The view of dancer A is one meter to the right side, and dancer B is also one meter away.

The impression that emerges from the spatial aspect of the dancers is contrast, dancer B looks weak/broken, while dancer A looks fierce/firm. The horizontal straight line pattern also gives a firm impression. **La Meri** states that the horizontal straight line gives a sense of reaching out to something. She is aware of the space around the

body and is suitable for all situations. While the contrasting lines give the audience a feeling of strength or confusion, a suggestion of intellectual and emotional development (La Meri in Soedarsono. 1975. p. 25)



**Picture 4.** The part of *Tangkepanwar*

#### 4. The movement in the *mundur beksan*

It is started by being stabbed 1 dancer A, then *srisig* left the stage towards the front right corner. One dancer B *srisig* chased *Wadal wredi*, then turned right around to *kebyak sampur enjeran*, *kebyok sampur*, *srisig* left the stage towards the back left corner.

The line design visualized on the floor by dancer B (real *Sekartaji*) is straight and then curved, with energy flowing

slowly, the rhythm slows down, and the body position is more of a medium level, giving a calm impression. Meanwhile, dancer A (fake *Sekartaji* /*wadalwerdi*) *labas* quickly to the right/front right corner with strong power. The impression of lines on the floor is sharp.

La Meri argues that the angular lines suggest a conscious use of force. While a slows down movement through the levels in the *timing legato*, the desire will rise. Feelings of depression will disappear. (La Meri in Soedarsono. 1975. Pg. 25)



**Picture 5.** The *MundurBeksan* part

#### 5. The movement of connecting /*singget*

It is a connecting movement among various motifs of movement. The movement is carried out with details count 1-2 the left leg's position is tilted to the left and the right foot's

position is tilted right in front of the left foot, both hands are *trap cethik tumpang tali*. In count 3-4, the right foot moves back while right hand *seblak sampur* to the right side, the left hand *trap cethik* left, and the left foot remains the same. In count 5-6, the position of the two hands is *rawit trap* the stomach, the right foot *mancat* to the right side, the left foot remains the same. In count 7, the body position from *adeg mancat* becomes *mendak*, the position of both hands is *trap* the stomach with the fingers of the right hand *ngrayung* up, and the fingers of the left hand *ngrayung* down.

The *Singget* movement is carried out in a fixed space / does not move. It is usually done in strong areas of the stage design such as *adead center*, front right corner, front left corner, back right corner, back left corner. Performed with flowing energy, medium body level, and a slow rhythm of time, *singget* has a strong visual, as a starting point for the next movement.

La Meri mentioned that the most powerful area in dance is

the dead center. Six regions in order, based on the strength, are up center, down center, up right, up left, down right, and down left (La Meri in Soedarsono. 1975. P. 5)



**Picture 6.** *Singget* movement, a pause for a movement transition

## B. Dancers

Group choreography is a composition that is danced by more than one dancer or is not a single dance (solo dance). In other words, it can be interpreted as a duet dance or two dancers, a trio or three dancers, a quartet or four dancers, and even more (Hadi. 2017. Pg. 82).

In a duet dance or dance that is focused on two points, it is easier to present 'symmetrical' or 'asymmetrical' motifs. Two symmetrical and asymmetrical motifs from two dancers can be distinguished by the terms symmetrical-asymmetrical

opposition or opposite and symmetrical-asymmetrical succession or similar (Hadi. 2017. P. 84).

The duet dancers in *Sekartaji Tandhing's* dance also present symmetrical - asymmetrical opposition and symmetrical - asymmetrical succession motifs. See the motifs below:



**Picture 7.** Symmetrical-asymmetrical succession motif



**Picture 8.** Symmetrical - asymmetrical opposition motif

The aspects of gender and body posture of the dancers in group composition must be considered in

both literal and non-literal. Especially a group choreography that is literal or tells a story, which is often referred to as dance-drama type. This type of dance drama is a literary work with certain story themes, presenting a clear storyline or chronology, the characterizations are in accordance with the character and gender, and remain unchanged (Hadi. 2017. P. 91)

In *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance, both two female dancers are visualized in their teens (20 years old), with an average height of 150 cm, medium build, and tan skin. The selection of almost identical dancers is adjusted to the content of the dance or the theme that is lifted from the story of *Wadaiwredi* who transformed into *Sekartaji*. It is in line with Wahyudiyanto's opinion:

*Based on the typology of Sekartaji's character, the dancers can't be plump since, in the story of Panji, Sekartaji experienced many problems. Therefore, imaginatively, it is more make relevant to depict Sekartaji's character as a thin woman (Interview with Wahyudiyanto. November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021).*

In conclusion, the analysis of movement in *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance choreography with material, space, time, and energy elements; the visualization of space, energy, time, materials on the floor design with lines, levels, movement motifs, spatial designs formed as a result of space communication among dancers, and the dancing aspects visualize the aesthetic value of Sekartaji's character in *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance who is beautiful, graceful, calm, dashing, strong, firm, and authoritative. All of them are supported by the dancers' character which is relatively the same height, 150 cm, with tan skin and slim body posture.

## CONCLUSION

The article entitled the Analysis of *Sekartaji's* Character Movement in the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance is an analytical study of movement and character of *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance. This study presented that *Sekartaji* character in the *Sekartaji Tandhing* dance meets the aspects of movement analysis and good quality characters.

The inner and outer reflections used as aspects in analyzing the *Sekartaji Tandhing's* characters discovered an aesthetic point that its beauty can be felt and was scientifically justified.

The author expects that this study provides an insight for choreographers to reliably be responsible for their choreographies, as well as being a source of information for readers to help them understand the aesthetic form or value of a choreography.

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