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The Exploration of Srimpi Widanti Dance as an Effort to Preserve Traditional Dance in Art Education

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Abstract:

This study aims to determine the form of the Srimpi Widanti dance presentation and is an effort to preserve traditional dance in art education. This study covers the history of the Srimpi Dance and the form of presentation of the Srimpi Widanti Dance, one of the Yogyakarta Style Classical Dances that has not been performed in art performances for a long time.

This study applied a qualitative approach and an ethnographic method. The data collection techniques were observations, interviews, and documentation studies. The instruments used for the data collection were observation sheets, interview guides, and documentation guides. The data were validated by using source triangulation. The informants in this study were the manager of the Pamulangan Beksa Sasmita Mardawa Foundation, the Head of Education, and a dance studio teacher.

The results of the research concluded that the form of the Srimpi Widanti Dance presentation is from the Menak story. In its performance, it is danced by four dancers and four people sitting during the dance performance as jemparing (bow and arrow) carriers. The performance of Srimpi with sitting dancers is the uniqueness of the Srimpi Widanti dance. Bedhaya and Srimpi are symbols of simplicity and determination. The appearance is not flashy but emphasizes the depth of the soul. This traditional dance exploration is an effort to introduce the Srimpi Dance form which has a unique story and property usage that is different from other dances, and to increase knowledge in art education, especially dance.

Keywords: Form of presentation, dance, srimpi

1. Introduction

As a nation that has cultural diversity bound by the spirit of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*, the Indonesian people are required to be able to manage diversity or plurality well, which can make a conducive contribution to the efforts in strengthening the spirit and unity of the Indonesian nation, especially the spirit to build culture in society. This cultural diversity can create a multicultural society if people can live together by having tolerance and mutual respect. These cultural values are not just discourse but must be a benchmark for ethical and moral values and guidelines in society. These values must be a reference, in the social, economic, and political fields as well as in individual actions (Fitriani, 2020).

Indonesian culture can give a sense of the personality of the Indonesian people. As a whole and the unity of the nation, therefore the Indonesian nationality must have a distinctive character and give pride to the Indonesian nation. Koentjaraningrat mentions that from the elements of universal culture, which includes: (1) technological systems; (2) livelihood system; (3) social system; (4) language; (5) knowledge system; (6) religion; and (7) art, only one can be developed specifically, namely art. The diversity of forms and characteristics of art that has emerged and can be inherited to this day as an expression of the supporting community contains the noble values of the nation's culture which is priceless. One of the arts that has been attached and become a cultural characteristic for the community is the art of dance. Dance is an expression of human feelings expressed by purposeful, culturally determined expressive human body movements. It contains rhythm, aesthetic value, and has symbolic potential (Pamadhi, 2012).

Dance which is one of the great cultural heritages of Indonesia must be developed in line with the development of society towards renewal. Indonesian dance traditions must become living traditions, so that Indonesian people do not become old-fashioned people. Based on the artistic value of their work, traditional dances are divided into 3, namely Primitive Dance (simple), Folk Dance, and Classical Dance which is usually referred to as Palace Dance. Classical dance is a dance that originally developed among kings and aristocrats and has achieved high artistic crystallization and has also gone through a long history so that it has traditional values (Soedarsono, 1978: 13).

Among the people outside the Palace of Yogyakarta, the Srimpi dance is often considered for all Yogyakarta style female dances. In fact, the name of the Srimpi Dance is for a type of Yogyakarta classical dance which is always danced by four dancers. The word Srimpi is a synonym for the number four. Only in the Srimpi Renggowati Dance, there are five dancers with stories from Anglingdharma. Srimpi Widanti dance is a Yogyakarta Style Classical Dance that has never been studied or performed for a long time. The Srimpi Widanti dance originates from the story of Menak. In its performance, it is danced by four dancers and four people sitting as *jemparing* carriers during the dance.

Based on the explanation above, the author is interested in studying more deeply about the form of presentation of the Srimpi Widanti dance. The problem formulation of this journal is how to present the Srimpi Widanti Dance.

2. Method

This study employed descriptive method and the data collection technique used in writing was literature study. Literature study is the first step in the data collection method. Literature study is a data collection method that is directed at searching for data and information through documents, either written documents, photographs, figure s, or electronic documents that can support the writing process.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. The History of the Srimpi Dance

Yogyakarta Style Classical Dance is often called '*JOGED MATARAM*' or Mataram Dance. Besides being shorter to write and pronounce, this term sounds more appropriate to be used to represent the meaning of dance which is regional in nature and has high artistic and cultural values, as the greatness that has been owned by the Mataram Kingdom. Yogyakarta Style Classical Dance was created by Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono I who reigned from 1775 - 1792.

The late Prof. Dr. Priyono associated the name 'Srimpi' with the root word '*impi*' or dream. When people watch the graceful dance for forty-five to one hour, they are like being transported to another world, a dreamland. That is how to live a dance. In the past, this way of understanding was in accordance with the atmosphere of a calm and serene life, which was very different from the atmosphere of today's people. In the human soul, there are four elements of lust that can arise from time to time through any part of the human body, namely: mouth, nose, eyes and ears. They compete each other to influence or control the soul. The purpose of the Creator is so that humans can know and then be able to overcome the characteristics of the four passions (Sastralaya-MSP1, 1999: 19).

The characteristics of the dance created by Rama Sas is that it combines classical and romantic elements in a package. In an effort to develop and preserve a noble cultural heritage, he tries to give a new spirit to his work so that it is relevant and acceptable to the community and the era. However, he still maintained certain rules that are owned by Yogyakarta Style Classical Dance. The abridgement of dance as well as the inclusion of new elements of movements in his dance works are a manifestation of the efforts he has made with a vision for the future. The aim is to meet the needs of the public who have practical, economical thoughts, and do not have much time, as well as to preserve the art itself.

The Srimpi Widanti dance was created by R.B. Sasmita Mardawa around 1957. This dance was used as a learning material at Among Beksa. Among Beksa is one of the associations or organizations outside the Kraton or the Palace of Yogyakarta after the Krida Beksa Wirama association. Krida Beksa Wirama's goal is to develop and disseminate the art of dance outside the Kraton. The originator of which is GPH. Tedjokusumo and BPH. Soerjodiningrat. This dance is danced by four dancers assisted by four people who sit as carriers of the *jemparing* used in the war of *jemparing*. In addition to *jemparing*, the property used is *keris* or the kris. The Srimpi Widanti dance tells of the war between Dewi Kadarwati and Dewi Sirtupelaheli. The word *Widanti* itself is taken from the *gendhing* or gamelan music composition that accompanies it. The word *widanti* consists of two words, namely *wida* which means fragrant, soft and *anti* or *enti* which means a symbol of women, so 'widanti' means a girl or woman who is soft and gentle (Javanese Bausastra Dictionary).

3.2. The Form of Srimpi Widanti Dance Presentation

The Srimpi Widanti dance is danced by four dancers and assisted by four people sitting as *jemparing* carriers. The performance of Srimpi with four people sitting is the uniqueness of the Srimpi Widanti Dance. Bedhaya and Srimpi are symbols of simplicity and determination. The appearance is not flashy but more in the depth of the soul. In the Palace of Yogyakarta, the person in charge of serving the King, the one who brings the King's equipment is called '*manggung*'. The role of *manggung* is very necessary, especially during important ceremonies in the Kraton or Palace of Yogyakarta. The role of the four people sitting in the dance is likened to the role of *manggung*, namely serving. In Srimpi, the role of sitting dancers is to serve or assist Srimpi dancers in dancing by bringing the dance properties.

3.2.1. Dance Movement

Srimpi Widanti dance uses the movements of the Yogyakarta Style Classical Female Dance. The variety is taken from the various Bedhaya Dances, because Bedhaya is the source of all kinds of Yogyakarta Style Classical Dance. The specifications of the movement characteristics of the Srimpi Widanti Dance are the movements of *kengser ulap-ulap tawing*, *tawing nyankol udhet kiri*, and *kupu tarung* which are carried out alternately without a stroke. Like in the war, they are using *keris* or the kris and *jemparing*.

3.2.2. Dance Formation

The Srimpi Widanti dance uses a *lunibungan* or a square formation. This is the basic or simple formation from the presentation of the Srimpi Widanti Dance. It does not use a diagonal formation, because it is developed from the square formation. The more common formations used are square, vertical or horizontal straight lines. In the presentation, the dancers move to another dancers' position in a formation.



Figure 1: The Performance of Srimpi Widanti Dance

3.2.3. Dance Moves

The moves of the Srimpi Widanti Dance consist of:

- Sembahan sila
- Panggel ngregem udet
- Nggurda kiri 3 x mayuk jinjit
- Nggurda kanan 2 x mayuk jinjit
- Nggurda kiri 2 x sendi
- Lampah semang ngembat kengser tengen
- Nggudawa asta minggah
- Nyamber tengen
- Ulap-ulas wetah
- Tawing nyangkol udet
- Kicat nyangkol udet
- Ngunduh sekar
- Ngancap
- Pudak mekar
- Kengser ulap-ulas
- Ngenceng encot
- Parangan keris
- Parangan jemparing
- Nyamber kiri
- Kicat boyong
- Nggurda jengkeng
- Sendi nglayang
- Sembahan sila

3.2.4. Costumes and Make-Up

The dancers of the Srimpi Dance wear *rias jahitan* (make-up of *rias paes* that applies on the eye area forming lines starting from the corner of the eyes out towards the temples) while the sitting dancers wear *rias paes* (traditional Javanese make-up applied on the forehead, usually worn by a Javanese bride) without *prada* (the gold line on the *rias paes*). The *rias paes* used by the sitting dancers in Srimpi Dance is also equated with stage make-up, because their role is the same, namely serving. The make-up and costumes of the sitting dancers are more luxurious because they can give a majestic and prominent impression to the Srimpi dancers. *Paes* worn by the sitting dancers is not accompanied by the use of *prada*. *Prada* is a sign of greatness or gold, because the word '*prada*' means gold. *Paes* with *prada* is only worn by the daughters of the King at the time of the wedding ceremony.

The dancers' costumes consist of:

- Black vest black
- *Jarik parang* (cloth with batik parang pattern)
- *Sampur cindhe* (a type of shawl used in Javanese dance with batik cindhe pattern)
- *Jamang bulu* (a type of head accessories with feather worn on the forehead)
- Head accessories: *sinyong* (a type of bun), *ceplak jebehan* (a type of artificial flower worn on the bun), 5 *mentul* (accessories on the head shaped like a flower with a stem, usually made of mixed metal), *pethat/sisir* (accessories

like a comb made of metal placed on a bun and shaped like a mountain), *pelik* (a decoration made of white paper cutouts shaped into four-petalled flowers).

- Accessories: earrings, bracelets
- Leather accessories: necklace, *sumping* and *ron* (types of accessories worn on the ears), *slepe* (a type of belt), *klat bahu* (accessories worn on the left and right upper arms)
- Properties: *keris* and *jemparing*



Figure 2: The Dancers' Costumes

The sitting dancers' costumes consist of:

- Vest (without *gombyok*)
- *Jarik* with *luring* pattern and golden thread.
- *Sampur cindhe*
- Head accessories: *gelung bokor* (a bun shaped like a bowl), *1 sisir* or *pethat*, *1 mentul*
- Metal accessories: earrings, *sumping*, *klat bahu*, necklace, bracelets, *pendhing*



Figure 3: The Sitting Dancers'

3.2.5. Dance Musical Accompaniment

The dance uses gamelan music, *gendhing Widanti pelog pathet barang*, *kendhangan gandrung-gandrung*, *ladrang*, *ketawang Wijil Sulastri*, then *ayak-ayak*. This Srimpi Widanti dance accompaniment is very varied and does not use *bawa* (a song sung by a woman or a man before the gamelan is played).

3.2.6. Lighting

In the dance performance, general lighting is used because the dance is usually performed in a *pendhapa* (an open pavilion-like building). Besides, there are no highlighting characters, so that color lights are not necessary.

4. Conclusion

The Srimpi Widanti dance was created by R.B. Sasmina Mardawa around 1957. This dance was used as a learning material at Among Beksa and has only been performed once at the beginning of the establishment of Among Beksa. The word *widanti* itself is taken from the *gendhing* or gamelan music composition that accompanies it. The word *widanti* consists of two words, namely *wida* which means fragrant and soft, and *anti* or *enti* which means a symbol of women, so *widanti* means a girl or woman who is soft and gentle (Javanese Bausastra Dictionary). The relationship between the meaning of the word and the story is that it tells the story of two women who both have strengths or advantages, so that both of them have weight. The Srimpi Widanti dance tells the story between Dewi Kadarwati and Dewi Sirtupelaheli. It is danced by four dancers assisted by another four sitting dancers. The properties used are kris and *jemparing*. This

traditional dance exploration is an effort to introduce the Srimpi Dance form which has a unique story and property usage that is different from other dances, and to increase knowledge in art education, especially dance.

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